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NAME OF AUTHOR/NOM DE L'AUTEUR: B. L. CHOMICA

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRY INTO THE METAPHYSICAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MUSIC OF SCHOENBERG AND STRAVINSKY

by

© BRIEN L. CHOMICA

A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "A Philosophical Enquiry into the Metaphysical and Cultural Significance of the Music of Schoenberg and Stravinsky" submitted by Brien L. Chomica in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Philosophy.

Anthony M. Mendiros
Supervisor

H. M. Van de Pette

Ernesto Lejano

September 1, 1976
Date

To:
DARYL VERVILLE,
for love of beautiful soul.

ABSTRACT

The middle two chapters of this essay are devoted to a philosophical analysis of the music of Schoenberg and Stravinsky. These chapters are flanked by discussions on those topics necessary as an introduction to and contextual placement of the main body of analysis. Therefore, the Introduction is concerned with elucidating the nature of a philosophy of music; and the first chapter is primarily a presentation of some of the metaphysical qualities of music; the final chapter deals more with its cultural relevance.

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INTRODUCTION

THE QUESTION OF METHOD

Only the works of Schoenberg and Stravinsky are discussed here. One can rightly enquire why this is so; and part of the answer is that it is not done under the illusion that grand and modern masters of the queen of the arts are being discussed. There is a less esoteric reason, namely, that if one surveys products of new music -- not so much chronologically, but in terms of their inner qualities -- the characters of Schoenberg and Stravinsky would be constantly encountered in all the transitions and compromises displayed in the field of modern music.

A short review of the history of music since Schoenberg illustrates this. Anton Webern (1883-1945) was a foremost student and close friend of Schoenberg. Webern avoided consonance rigorously and composed in the twelve-tone system with clear logic and the utmost clarity. His pieces are usually very short and very quiet. After the war it was to Webern's music that young composers turned for inspiration. In its purity and rigor they found a seemingly safe and sane complement to the chaos which the world had just been through. The notion of <u>order</u> was heading the list of important ideas, and order in the hands of the new composers extended from the tones of the twelve-tone row to duration, intensity, and tone-quality. Pierre Boulez (b. 1925), Karlheinz Stockhausen (b. 1928) and Milton Babbitt (b. 1916) of the United States tried to bring every feature of a composition under a single guiding rule of structure. Today Babbitt teaches on the American east coast. He espouses these methods and believes music to be a vehicle for cerebration. So the passion with which Schoenberg forged the new system of twelve-tone technique has now its logical conclusion in the "total serialism" of a group of American university composers.

Stravinsky, on the other hand, exuded a wild and violent dissonance, the like of which was never known or heard before Le sacre (1913). It was an expression of the supposedly amoral and impersonal forces of nature. Technically, this opened the door not merely for dissonance and the dictatorship of rules (as Schoenberg's school did), but also for noise. Noise is an irregular vibration of indefinite pitch, and of course is a factor in all music: it is present most conspicuously in percussion instruments of all times and cultures. The first composer to work extensively with noise is probably Edgar Varese (1885-1965). His compositions have virtually no melody or consonance and even little regular rhythm. Varese felt compelled to express what one can only call ugliness: in a major work of his called Deserts he writes not only of physical wasteland, but deserts of the mind, empty, remote, lonely. All artists have made use of ugliness, that is not what is new here. But now this wild ugliness and products of the lower human psyche are gazed at with long-faced seriousness. This is a product of the current individualistic view of art, which has it that anyone is welcome to 'express himself', that is, to bring his so-called impulses and surface personality to public expression, regardless of whether these things are worth expressing. Often times both artist and audience are deceived into believing that they are creating and absorbing 'art', while in fact they are falling victim to crude pranks of the mind.

Another Stravinsky-inspired influence is the position that ugliness does not really exist. This view goes to great trouble to avoid aesthetic judgments and personal preferences. So the sounds of a composition are allowed 'freedom to be themselves', independently of human choice and interference. The American John Cage (b. 1912) welcomes anything and everything into his artistic milieu. In his writings, Cage speaks from some vantage point apparently beyond good and evil, but -- to his credit, indeed -- not beyond beauty. He is

probably the most influential figure in the arts since 1950. But he has opened the way for all sorts of half-baked artists because of his acceptance of everything. In truth, Cage has no followers, for his idea and life is that beauty is visible in all things when the ego is shed; in enlightenment all that is is music. Too many people want to live a mountain-top philosophy while grovelling around the foot-hills. It is in one sense a short step from universal acceptance to universal apathy.

Olivier Messiaen (b. 1908) is a modernist without the rigorous dissonance dictated by conformity to the Schoenbergian system. Messiaen's music is rich and full of colour. In fact, he possessed synaesthetic perception, and some of his works bear visual indications, noting the colours and forms he sees with the notes he hears. Messiaen is certainly not as influential as Cage, but his life is one of principled and elevated theology. Some of his compositions are The Celestial Banquet, The Ascension, The Glorious Body (all for organ); Quartet for the End of Time; the massive Turangalila Symphony in ten movements on the Eastern subject of Lila, the Divine Play, and Love. Messiaen is definitely a high and incorruptible force behind avant-garde music.

If Messiaen's music is filled with idealized bird calls and mingled with musical landscapes and theological inspiration, then his complement is Karlheniz Stockhausen (b. 1928) who, in the early 1960's, was the leader of post-Weberian avant-garde music. He was the first to compose according to mathematical sine waves, in Electronic Study I (1953). And his Piano Piece XI (1955) consists of eighteen fragments which can be played in any order; it is like a little suite of Webern studies. But by the mid-1960's Stockhausen moved to less rigorous modes of writing, to improvisation and unpredictability. His Plus-Minus (1963) is a do-it-yourself kit for performers; it consists of a

collection of disconnected notes and symbols which can be assembled into a piece of any duration for any instrumentalists.

Gradually one can see in Stockhausen the influence of Webern replaced by that of Cage. At the completion of Carré (1964) he wrote in a program note: 'I wish from my heart that this music could give a little inner stillness, breadth, and concentration; a consciousness that we have plenty of time if we want to take it -- that it is better to go into oneself than to go beside oneself ....' After Carré, in May of 1968 to be precise, Stockhausen betook himself to a forest where he spent seven days with neither food nor sleep. He emerged with a book of instructions for musicians. It is called From the Seven Days.[1] It contains no notation, and is in the form of verse. From his instructions, it is clear music is to be a kind of meditation. Stockhausen enjoins us, the musicians, to

> think NOTHING
> wait until it is absolutely still within you
> when you have attained this
> begin to play.

Many have tried sometimes for many years to stop thinking. But there is a genuineness about this advice that convinces the open heart that the composer has experienced what he enjoins upon the musicians.

Stockhausen, with his Electronic Studies I and II, is the step into electronic music. It is unfortunately the case that the fascination for the medium drains young composers of their feeling for the human side of music. With electronic sound synthesizers 'musicians' can 'compose' in this medium; they do not require the ability to read musical notation. One can well ask what use all this equipment is.

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[1] London: Universal Edition, 1969. The following quotation is from p. 27.

Presumably its purpose is to produce sounds not available on conventional instruments. Then, of course, the composer works not only with notes or tones, but with noises. The composers play with sounds; but one feels something incomplete. When one asks why one should hear this sound here and now, no particular reason can be given; and yet the work is offered as music, as a composer's communication of his aural 'vision' to his listeners: should there not be, if it is indeed music, the possibility of clear comprehension of the vision? (Twelve-tone technique of course attempts an answer -- when one is spared having to deal with noise -- but it satisfies the head of the technician, and not the heart of the music-lover.)

Enough on the history of modern music since Schoenberg and Stravinsky. It was offered to illustrate the point that the characters of these two innovators are encountered in all the developments and compromises that music composition since their prime displays. And it is clear now that Schoenberg -- the rationalist with the passionate and dramatic sources of inspiration -- and Stravinsky -- the violent sensualist with the dispassionate conformity to the depersonalized 'machine-age' -- are the antitheses whose various relationships constitute the musical procedures of today. Therefore to discover more about these two composers, as well as more about modern music -- to see how they exhibit rationality and emotion -- one has to examine their creative output. The consistency of their driving impulses and ideas are revealed in the field of compositional procedures, and <u>not</u> in compositional styles. The reader has just reviewed a history of compositional styles, and the influence of Schoenberg and Stravinsky is not found in the stylistic considerations involved. The two composers really cannot be nailed down with the catch-words of twelve-tone, neo-classical, electronic. Their influence is present in the <u>way</u> in which a composition becomes real in the world; it is the music itself which reveals their presence. And to know them is to know their music, divorced from stylistic terminology and concentrated in the composi-

tional procedure.

This is the import of a philosophical analysis of music. It is concerned with a scrutiny of compositional procedures and not musical style, which latter is largely a matter of individual preference, and so plays no major role in a philosophical investigation. This can be called an analysis of the non-programmatic idea of music; and it is this with which philosophic analysis is solely concerned regardless of how closely stylistic notions are thought to be connected with it. The analysis is not performed in terms of the abstractions of bare concepts and categories, but rather in terms of the concretized, content-filled categories themselves, that is, in the structure of the musical compositions of Schoenberg and Stravinsky.

The assumption throughout this philosophic investigation is that the twelve-tone system is a product of historical necessity rising from the florid chromaticism of Wagner. This is even Schoenberg's understanding, and Thomas Mann's as well. This gives Schoenberg his historical position. In a bird's eye view, then , Schoenberg is more the progressive historical force; while Stravinsky is more the reactionary one, clinging to outmoded sounds and obselete forms in the desperate attempt to 'sound modern'. Thus Schoenberg and Stravinsky epitomize real dialectical oppostion to one another, an opposition which is the ground of the historical condition of music today and which is clearly discernible and comprehensible in their own compositions.

Walter Benjamin adheres to this principle as the basis for criticism of tragedy: 'The history of philosophy viewed as the science of origins is that process which, from opposing extremes, and from the apparent excesses of development, permits the emergence of the configuration of an idea as a totality characterized by the possibility of a meaningful juxtaposition of such antitheses inherent in these opposing extremes.'[2] This also makes a fine basis for a philosophical

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[2] Quoted in T.W. Adorno, Philosophy of Modern Music. (N.Y.: Seabury, 1973), p.3.

investigation of new music, for the restriction to two protagonists reveals the essence of this new music according to a dialectical tension. The protagonists here alone permit the perception of the truth of the content of modern music, because it is only in terms of these extremes that the content can be defined. For as Schoenberg notes, [3] 'The middle road is the only one that does not lead to Rome.' And part of the truth of the music is its expression of the social forces which produced it and maintain it.

If the above outline on the history of modern music is viewed in the light of the principle of Benjamin, the decline in the quality of the music of the second generation composers after Schoenberg and Stravinsky can be attributed to a lack of 'meaningful juxtaposition of antitheses'. Hence their relapse into a kind of traditionalism. Look at its genesis: it is a reaction to commercial exploitation, a commercialism whose management of distribution weeded out everything that did not conform to sales standards. The impending isolation of modern music under this condition was averted by producing a type of musical composition that feigns 'modernity' and 'seriousness' and adjusts itself to what it thinks culture is and what it thinks the age is. The adjustment is accomplished by a calculated feeblemindedness: it commits itself to nothing in particular and omits everything uncomfortable to the representatives of the prevalent tidy, unselfconscious, bourgeois culture of America. Hindemith and two generations of his students are routined neo-academics.

Third generation students definitely have lost the ability to structure musical relationships by tonality. They do not stoop to traditionalism, but they also would like to avoid the consequences of a completely new idiom, namely, failure on the market. They do not quite thoroughly follow a radical procedure, but harken back spora-

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[3] Foreward to Three Satires for Mixed Chorus, Op. 28, nos. 1-3

dically to the tried and true devices of history. The lack of method here leaves them open to the worst fate of all -- compositional anarchy, for they endanger what they try to preserve and discourage the bold attempt at the radically new. The result is an aesthetic compromise which shares the fate of a political compromise of freedom: that is, it is unsuccessful.[4] The compositions of this era reveal a simplicity born of ignorance rather than high insight -- the facile pupils of Stravinsky; an immaturity masquerading as enlightenment -- Shostakovitch; and a dearth of technical means -- Britten.[5] These composers all have the uncanny ability to exhibit the tasteless. But then this is really nor surprise: their eclecticism is of a shattered culture.

With regard to the question of the evaluation of modern music, mark that from the mid-nineteenth century onward, musicians of great power and depth were not concerned with commercialism. This is not to say, however, that commercialism was not concerned with the musicians. Public performances increased. And the small number of connoisseurs were replaced by all who cared to attend a public performance for the price of the ticket (see below, Ch. II, sec.I). Soon there developed an abyss between public taste and compositional quality, for the public was no longer participating in the living and working of the composers it knew by name. No longer were there connoisseurs, patrons, real lovers of arts and artists to mediate between the steppenwolf-genius and the bourgeois public.

Formally, this situation remains today (cf. below, Ch. III, sec. I). The prevailing musical language does not remove the burden of integrity from the modern composer: traditional standards of evaluation can still be applied to him. The question is, though, who can apply them? The composer is divorced from a participating public: he is still a rather queer duck. The answer seems to be that with

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[4]Hegel, Phenomenology of Mind (trans, by Baillie), p. 604.

[5]Cf. Adorno, p. 7.

the disappearance of the class of mediators, the task of mediating now falls to the composer himself. Surely he is the most equipped now to face squarely the inherent antagonisms and immutable questions encountered in the production of every work: what constitutes good and bad music cannot be abstractly learned by memory or bookish curiosity. Any composer knows that. One has to face the structure of the compositions themselves.

Yes, it is the composer who is equipped to be his own mediator to his public, to explain how his music is an expression of his love of life and adventures in feeling. Unfortunately, it is just the composer whom the requisite discursive reasoning most eludes. He cannot conduct a philosophical analysis of the non-programmatic idea of music: he is blinded by attachment to style and the material of music, to the sounds he can make here and now, to a <u>fetishism of the means</u> for music-making (see Ch. II, sec. 6).

So the public -- objectively deceived due to the nature of the situation -- holds the opinion that Beethoven is understandable and Schoenberg is not (see Ch. II, sec. 1). And this because they are cut off from participating in the production of new music, alienated from the academics who write it. Yet ironically, the characteristics of this music they do not understand procedes precisely from the sociological foundations peculiar to this alienated public. The wild dissonance they hate testifies to their own condition, and so for this reason do they find it unbearable. The hated and the haters are the same. They cannot look at themselves for fear of the insight that loneliness affords; but neither can they live with each other, for where there are no individuals there can be only classified personnel, a mob, cattle in the same stockyard oblivious to their waiting axe (see Ch. IV). Obviously, the opposite holds for the all-too-familiar Beethoven and Tschaikovsky, where that to which tonal music bore witness is so far removed from modern society that the era's own experience scarcely still communicates with it, participates in

it. They claim to understand it, and perceive only a neutralized, uncritical, vulgar show-piece. The music industry confirms this state of consciousness (or rather unconsciousness) by channeling Viennese harmony and soaring romanticism into a department store temple, by making it another household commodity. The honey-sauced sweetness of the hit tune dulls the perceptive faculty so much that the concentration required for responsible listening is permeated by recollections of this spineless music; that is, responsible listening becomes impossible.[6] And people are trained in this culture not to exert themselves in their leisure time (see Ch. III, sec. 4). The result is that people attach themselves to the external framework of a work of art that houses its essence: anything not sounding light is regarded as 'classical' -- a category existing merely as a contrast to this inability to listen (cf. Ch. II, sec. 1).

So the music distributing industry has made traditional music resemble commercial mass production, and modern music is commercially marketable only if it resembles traditional music (see Ch. III, sec.3). But music, like any other culturally controlled product, is bound up with that division of art into kitsch and avant-garde. Kitsch -- recognizable by the applicability to it of the formula: profit over cultural revelation -- currently dominates the epoch. Therefore any consideration of the truth in aesthetics deals with the avant-garde. 'For in human Art we are not merely dealing with playthings, however pleasant or useful they may be, but ... with a revelation of truth.'[7] The hope is, as Adorno voices,[8] that kitsch-culture heralds its own demise: it contributes to the advancement of barbarism, and is enraged at the barbarism it advances. Hesse characterizes this semi-conscious feeling about kitsch-culture in Steppenwolf:[9] 'I stood for a moment on the scent, smelling this shrill and blood-raw

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[6] cf. Adorno, Philosophy of Modern Music, p. 10.

[7] Hegel, The Philosophy of Fine Art, trans. F. Osmaston (London, 1920), Vol. IV, p. 349.

[8] p. 10.

[9] Bantam Books, pp. 43-4.

music, sniffing the atmosphere of the hall angrily, and hankering after it a little too. One half of this music, the melody, was all pomade and sugar and sentimentality. The other half was savage, tempermental and vigorous. Yet the two went artlessly well together and made a whole. It was the music of decline. There must have been such music in Rome under the late emperors. Compared with Bach and Mozart and real music as it was, naturally, a miserable affair; but so was all our art, all our thought, all our makeshift culture in comparison with real culture.' Then Hesse gives a series of rhetorical and wonderfully ironic questions well in the grand ironic style of Thomas Mann: 'Were we, the old connoisseurs, the reverers of Europe as it used to be, of genuine music and poetry as once they were, nothing but a pig-headed minority suffering from a complex neurosis, whom tomorrow would forget or deride? Was all that we called culture, spirit, soul, all that we called beautiful and sacred, nothing but a ghost long dead, which only a few fools like us took for true and living?' The obvious 'answers' to these 'questions' are plainly the allusion of his remark in the Author's Note to Steppenwolf: 'This book, no doubt, tells of griefs and needs; still it is not a book of a man desparing, but of a man believing.'[10]

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10 Harry Haller -- the Steppenwolf -- pays the price of admission to the Magic Theatre: namely, his "mind", his empirical consciousness. Hermine, the person he stabs, is the sensuous or worldly mind. In negating the reality of a material, fluctuating, grief-engendering mode of consciousness, Haller begins to see, to live; he begins to transcend, to become human. Most works of Beethoven from Op. 106 and following, the works of Busoni (like the Sarabande and Cortege for orchestra and the opera Doctor Faust), and the works of Scriabin from the Fifth Symphony, "Prometheus: The Poem of Fire", Op. 60 and following, most explicitly illustrate this interpretation of this motif from Hesse's Steppenwolf. (Note that the light from this kind of attention when directed to composers' works such as those of Stravinsky, Shoshtakovitch, and Britten expose the general features of their works as given on page 8 above.)

Thomas Mann says [11] that the Apocalypsis con figuris and the Lament of Doctor Faustus of Leverkuhn had to be contrived so as 'to make the opus open simultaneously to the criticism of bloody barbarism and to the criticism of bloodless intellectualism.' It is just this criticism of modern culture generally, and modern music specifically, that his Doctor Faustus expresses. This expression is in the form of irony: 'There must be some interest on the part of Satan in order that there be action. The expression of that interest takes the form of irony standing above reality.'[12] (See note 32 to Ch. III.)

Social isolation, a problem that cannot be allievated by art alone, is yet a mortal danger to art's successful contribution to this alleviation of isolation. Hegel stated something which is of grave concern to the life of music: he said music is forced to rely on its own pure immanence as the decisive factor of its development. This is due in that case -- namely, this present one -- where music loses positive social relevance, public participation. The composer can, says Hegel, 'in complete indifference to such a scheme, devote himself to musical structure simply and the assertion of his genius in such architectonics. Composition, however, of this character readily tends to become defective both in the range of its conception and emotional quality, and as a rule does not imply any profound cultivation of mind or taste in other respects. And by reason of the fact that such a content is not necessary, it frequently happens that the gift of musical composition not merely will show considerable development in very early age, but composers of eminence remain their life long

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11 The Genesis of a Novel. (London: Secher and Warburg, 1961), p. 126.

12 IBID., p. 113.

men of the poorest and most impoverished intellectual faculty in other directions. More penetration of character may be assumed where the composer even in instrumental music is equally attentive to both aspects of composition; in other words, the expression of a content, if necessarily less defined than in our previous mode, no less than its musical structure, by which means it will be in his power at one time to emphasize the melody, at another the depth and colour of the harmony, or finally to fuse each with the other.'[13] (Cf. the text to note 27 of Ch. III.)

The fact of the matter, though, is that this 'lack of thought and sensitivity' (about which Hegel speaks in this context) is precisely the cause of the dearth of ideas expressed in music. And furthermore, a lack of thought and sensitivity -- that is, the absence of expression of a content -- cannot be made up for by rhythmical variation or additional melodic content.

The importance of the passage is its voicing of an historical force operative upon the artist, namely, that he is in a position to devote himself solely to the development of musical structure without regard to social content. But the historical force goes much further than Hegel realized. This culture is in an odd position, for nowadays the artist is <u>less</u> free than Hegel could have imagined at the start of the liberal age: 'The dissolution of everything traditionally taken for granted has <u>not</u> resulted in the possibility of disposing all materials and technical means according to discretion ...'[14] This will become obvious as the philosophical analysis procedes in the course of the following chapters. The paradox to be developed is that rather than becoming free, 'the artist' -- and by discarding a musical tradition of tonality and form -- 'has become the mere executor of his own intentions, which appear before him as strangers -- inexorable

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[13] <u>Fine Arts</u>, Vol. III, p. 425.

[14] Adorno, p. 17. Italics added.

demands of the compositions upon which he is working.'[15]

The kind of freedom Hegel is talking about is necessarily related to the pre-established tradition -- tonality, for example -- within which possibilities for expression abound. Beethoven most clearly illustrates this freedom, but, ironically, Hegel hardly takes any notice of him. If the artist eliminates the pre-established, then indeed he can produce a work existing in and for itself alone; but this results in an ossification of music and eviscerates its inner content. And inner content cannot be replaced or equalled or substituted by rhythmic variation and so on. (See Ch. II.) Therefore the work that exists solely in and for itself cannot accomodate the alterations and additions Hegel suggests in the attempt to save (to give a content to) instrumental music. Of course, this is exactly what happened in modern music, and is why it is not free (see text to note 32 of Ch. III).

Atonal music attempts to escape the apprehension of its own unfreedom by further submerssion into its laws. But inherent antithesis is not avoided: modern twelve-tone works are based on polyphony; and polyphony always speaks in the first person plural, for it is founded on worship and dance. But modern music is isolated; it does not reflect collective representations (participation) that can be voiced by polyphony. It uses the language of "we", actually voices the "I", and turns participation into a myth. The music is then offered to a public from the assumed standpoint of the "we" -- indeed from what other standpoint can music be offered, for as Schoenberg notes, music is historically rooted and grows out of forms of participation. The music is offered, but the audience is small. This inherent tension in the music seems to be appeased by ushering the music deeper into its own laws, its separate world. The escape from its irrelevance underscores its untruth (see Ch. II, sec. 1).

The further a work advances in its being solely in and for itself, in its autonomy, the more it alienates itself from a concrete

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[15] loc. cit.

relationship to everything connected with music. So in music, when at last the remaining heteronomous feature is conquered by imposed law -- this feature being pre-established tonality -- the music blithely and indifferently circles round and round inside itself. It is separated from that real element of otherness -- that element of resistance -- upon whose existence it depended for its meaning, its beauty, its power of inspiration and persuasion. Without there being something there as a challenge for music to draw the spirit out of the body of man, the music is as anaemic, remote, and self-indulgent as an Aristotlean god (see Ch. II, sec, 2,3). The truth of modern music is indeed, as Adorno says,[16] its isolation that results from its antithesis to society. But alas, the society is indifferent even to this;and so this truth too withers.

And the artist needs the paradox: the paradox that he speak to men by virtue of his isolation, and that he renounce the power of communication once thought to reside in the language he uses, in the artistic medium he uses. This is not an age for public genius, for the paradox does not obtain. And when the paradox does not obtain, creativity is crippled. The sympton of the lamed divinity is: works made under commission. This began with Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire and Stravinsky's works for Diaghilev. Most modern works published and performed are commissioned by institutions -- not to be confused with being requested by loving and participating patrons. Quite the contrary: the institutions commissioning works feel themselves culturally obliged to do so; but they are deaf to the works, alienated from them. What does Rockefeller Centre and the City of New York care about the slim possibility of contemporary artistic expression of critical ideas to a populace becoming increasingly unconcerned with the social organizers by which they are becoming increasingly manipulated? What care, indeed, except that it remain a matter of no concern; the object, after all, is to get a nice-looking piece

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16 p. 20.

of modern sculpture for the foyer of the remodelled Revenue Building. The artist, meanwhile, is confronted by the confining terms of the commission: some particular event or building, a deadline for completion, perhaps even a 'request' for the general tone-feeling of the work. Under these limitations, the capacity for fresh expression and daring spontaneity wilt.

The commission removes the challenge, the dare, the tension between subject and object that is the catalyst for the artist's egoless lifting of the taken-for-granted world up into the heightened vibrancy and delicacy and subtlety of feelings at first only he can experience. But no; the commission, by its massive economic organization and assumption of general acceptance of this machinery of domination, glosses over the artistic tension, the artistic rarity of feeling so finely expressive of the dialectics of subject and object, man and the world, the spirit and the flesh. With the disappearance of this sense of tension, the steppenwolf artist becomes a domesticated dog that urinates only where it is allowed. Adorno's observation is that if there is no tension, the artist languishes. And in this condition the so-called idea of the work is a superficial decoration on the artistic material manipulated to produce the composition. At this point, when our music detaches itself from the critical ear and detaches itself from communication with ideas, it becomes irrational. And the peak of its irrationality is most conspicuously revealed when it attempts to concern itself with ideas and philosophy, for then it even denies it harbours this antimony (see Ch. II, sec, 8; Ch. II, sec. 4).

Adorno has not given voice, however, to the other side of this commission situation. Often times, too, composers are given a carte blanche regarding a commission. This has occured frequently, for example, during the past ten years in commissions from the Canada Council. The results are disheartening: the works produced are often not of very high quality. The composers are not certainly all gifted

"steppenwolf-geniuses" who ache to manifest the subtlety of feeling their souls might perceive! Adorno rightly observes that listeners in our age are deaf. But to be a composer does not exclude one being also a listener. So presumably some composers write music they like to hear. This does not imply their ears are unplugged.

So the philosophy of music is concerned with the ground of music as this can be expressed by music's connection (or denial of connection) with ideas. Here then it is the ideas of works of art and their relationships that are to be philosophically conceived, even if this means, as Adorno recognizes,[17] going beyond what is superficially obvious and explicit in the art works. This method thus discloses the implications of compositional procedures in terms of the factors within the works themselves. The method here is to determine the idea in both sets of music-- Schoenberg's and Stravinsky's -- and pursue this idea until its inherent consequences unfold into their own criticism. So the philosophical method is immanent in the subject matter: the internal consistency of a work is justification of its truth, and indictment of its untruth.

In this historic hour, when reconciliation of subject and object (see below, Ch. II, sec. 3) is perverted to a satanic parody -- namely, the liquidation of the individual -- the only philosophy which still serves the true reconciliation is one which denounces the illusion of reconciliation, and, fearless of whatever alienation or ostracism it might incur upon itself, seeks to establish cogent and just expression of the hopelessly alienated, for which a voice scarcely any longer speaks.

"In the present phase, in which the apparatus of production and domination are merged, the question of mediation between superstructure and substructure -- like all other social mediation -- begins to grow obselete. Works of art -- like all precipitates of the objective spirit -- are the object itself. They are the concealed social essence quoted as the phenomenon. It might well be asked whether art has ever really been that mediated image of reality, as it attempts to validate itself before the power of the world. Was the attitude towards the world not, rather, founded in resistance against this power?" 18

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[17] pp. 26-28.

[18] Adorno, Philosophy of Modern Music p. 131.

This is the noble sentiment and language of Theodore W. Adorno. The present essay can be read in fair measure as an annotated presentation of his most salient and felicitous ideas concerning the philosophy of modern music.

CHAPTER I

MUSIC AND METAPHYSICS

1. SYNAESTHESIA

Prometheus, "The Poem of Fire", Op. 60, is the fifth and last symphonic work of Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915). It is a massive, impressively sonorous score for full orchestra, with flamboyant solo piano passages, a choir robed in white chanting vowel sounds of the sacred Eastern 'hum', and, originally at any rate, directions that following the commencement of Prometheus (Scriabin had intended it a place in a projected large-scale work, The Mysterium, which was also to include odors of exotic perfume and incense), the audience too was to be robed in pure white. Along the top of the orchestra score are two lines of notes for the tastiera per luce, a keyboard of lights -- a colour-organ -- that is to radiate in synchronization with the music appropriate colours on a screen behind the orchestra and throughout the concert hall into the audience. The upper line of notes indicates the basic harmonic texture of Prometheus (it begins on A-green and F-sharp blue) and the lower the nuances of the involution and evolution -- the inhalation and exhalation -- of the cosmos. The composition 'is a giant suspension of a thousand discords and distorted harmonies. It resolves at the last moment on F sharp major, unexpectedly.'[1]

Scriabin, like many other people possessed synaesthetic perception: sounds are suggestions of colours. Rachmaninoff, in his Recollections (1934) relates an incident about synaesthesia:[2]

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1 Faubion Bowers. Scriabin. (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1969) Volume II, p. 204.

2 Quoted in Sam Morgenstern, ed. Composers on Music: An Anthology of Composers' Writings. (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), pp. 373-4.

"I remember one discussion which took place between Rimsky-Korsakoff, Scriabin, and myself, while we were sitting at one of the little tables in the café de la Pain. One of Scriabin's new discoveries concerned the relation between musical sound, that is, certain harmonies and keys, and the spectrum of the Sun. If I am not mistaken he was just working out the plan of a great symphonic composition in which he was going to use this relation, and in which, together with the musical incidents, there was to be a play of light and colour. He had never reflected upon the practical possibilities of this idea, but that side of the question did not interest him very much. He said he would limit himself to marking his score with a special system of light and colour values.

"To my astonishment Rimsky-Korsakoff agreed in principle with Scriabin about this connection between musical keys and colour. I, who do not feel the similarity, contradicted them heatedly. The fact that Rimsky-Korsakoff and Scriabin differed over the paints of contrast between the sound-and-colour scale seemed to prove that I was right. Thus, for instance, Rimsky-Korsakoff saw E flat major as blue, while to Scriabin it was red-purple. In other keys, it is true, they agreed, as for example in D major (golden brown).

" "Look here!" suddenly exclaimed Rimsky-Korsakoff, turning to me. "I will prove to you that we are right by quoting your own work. Take, for instance, the passage in The Miserly Knight where the old Baron opens his boxes and chests, and gold and jewellery flash and glitter in the light of the torch. Well?"

"I had to admit that the passage was written in D major. "You see," said Scriabin,"your intuition has unconsciously followed the laws whose very existence you have tried in vain to deny."

"I had a much simpler explanation of this fact. While composing this particular passage I must have unconsciously borne in mind the scene in Rimsky-Korsakoff's opera Sadko, where the people, at Sadko's command, draw the great catch of goldfish out of Lake Ilman and break into the jubiliant shout, "Gold! Gold!" This shout is written in D major. But I could not prevent my two colleagues from leaving the café with the air of conquerors who were convinced that they had thoroughly refuted my opinion."

There are several points of interest concerning this passage, not all of which necessarily have to do with synaesthesia. First, one ought not receive the impression that Scriabin was profoundly careless of such triflings as the physical means of producing his work. The Prometheus score was written for a little machine designed by Mozer in Russia. Scriabin, though, never saw the work performed with colour in the large scale he had intended. It was performed with colours projected on a screen at the Bolshoi soon after Scriabin's death. In 1967, Bowers relates, the Rochester Philharmonic in New York City with Gyorgy Sandor performed it with full colours: Alex Ushakoff, a film producer and designer for simulation equipment in space travel, designed a device which distributed colours throughout the auditorium. The performance had moderate success. Further notice of Scriabin's interest in such mundane things is his design (worked out with his common-law wife, Tatyana Fydorovna Schloezer) for a piano not tuned in the standard tempered manner. The object of the design was to allow for the musician's claim that there are no enharmonics: E flat is different from D sharp.

Rachmaninoff seems to be unclear on the point that, according to his report, Scriabin barely insinuated, namely that a composer finds one right key for the idea of the piece he writes. The key of F sharp major, for example, has a peculiarly charged atmosphere for many composers. It may be described as something like a mixture of religious and mystical and erotic feelings, or an emphasis on one. Is it just the idea of writing in this key that prompts composers to seek new complexities of feeling? F sharp major being the only major key in black notes seems to be diametrically opposed to the open simplicity of C major -- in white notes. Merely an association of the artistic mind? Or is it rather the sound itself of F sharp

major? But that it is thus evocative is undeniable. Compare Chopin's Barcorotle, Scriabin's Fourth Sonata, and Prometheus, Albeniz's Fete dieu a Seville, Liszt's Les Jeux d'Eaux a la Villa d'Este and Benediction de Dieu dans la Solitude, and Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 78.

Secondly, allocating the phenomenon of synaesthesia to the domain of unconscious mental occurences does not in itself explain synaesthesia. Rachmaninoff did have to admit that Scriabin and Rimsky-Korsakoff agreed on the connection of sound and colour for the most part. But the question is, how is this agreement possible among many musicians if it were solely a case of contingent psychological associationism? Olivier Messiaen, for instance, has only to read a page of Scriabin to see colours. 'Strangely, these colours are different from the ones he sees when he hears the same Scriabin passage actually played.'[3] One of Scriabin's most remarkable compositions is a piece for piano written just months before his death, Vers la Flamme (Toward the Flame), Op. 72. Bowers(who experienced synaesthesia) describes it as 'crackling like lashing flames, sputtering and sparkling ... a Roman candle of increasing, magnifying blazes, until it becomes consumed in its own flames.' Vladimir Horowitz commenting on the piece says: 'This is psychedelic music dealing with the mysterious forces of fire and the atom that can destroy all of humanity. Scriabin previewed a vision of the atomic bomb.'[4]

The plain fact is that people who are discriminating and sensitive about sound have light experiences simultaneously with sound experiences, and their experiences are not unlike those of other

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3 Bowers, Scriabin, Vol. I, p. 95.

4 From the sleeve of Horowitz's all-Scriabin recording, Columbia Masterworks M31602 (1973).

discriminating and sensitive people. Now obviously everyone's history is different in content. So the fact of agreement among diverse people concerning synaesthetic experiences cannot be accounted for by suggesting that, just as in the cases of some phobias, a particular and personally impressing experience during the formative years carries over into adult life.

The necessary condition for the fact of agreement among people concerning synaesthetic perception is that they perceive the features of the subject of their experience. These features must be there for perception by a community of people. Now that a group of people intimately involved with certain objects perceive certain features of these objects is indicative for everyone else that these objects do indeed possess these features.[5] Now any of the greatest musicians that anyone can think of has maintained that music is more than merely pleasantly organized sound. Musicians see features of music that the undiscriminating mind cannot see. In sound is vibration and rhythm, and these are also the features of light. Vibration and rhythm are also features of the life of the soul: they are moods and feelings, and the patterns of childhood, adolescence and maturity. The light shines in the darkness, but unless the vision be unitary and holistic we see it not; we have ears and do not hear, and eyes and do not see.

Now, it is at least a psychological truism that colour affects disposition or mood: yellow kitchens are a persuasive and cheerful antidote to early-hour fogginess of mind, and factory-workers produce more when the walls are more interesting colours than grey or white -- regardless of the suspect ends embraced by managers and owners who capitalize on this fact. And music has comparable effects: any good host knows what music to select to meet the mood of a social gathering, or a scholar might find reassurance and suggestion in a Beethoven quartet during his times of contemplation.

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5 This is the view of Frank Sibley in "Colours", PAS, 1968 pp. 145-166.

There appears to be a chain of connections here: colour, mood, music. 'It is a curious coincidence that our highest vibrating musical sounds bring with them,' writes Edward Macdowell,[6] 'a well-defined suggestion of light, and that as the pitch is lowered we get the impression of ever increasing obscurity. To illustrate this I have but to refer you to the Prelude to Lohengrin. Had we no inkling as to its meaning, we should still receive the suggestion of glittering shapes in the blue ether.' Apparently Byron thought it more than a curious conincidence: he wrote, if not in very musical verse,

> There's music in all things if men had ears;
> their earth is but an echo of the spheres.

But Scriabin, as Rachmaninoff has implied, definitely regarded the coincidence as more a case of actual connection. The colour correlations to each note he worked out in the following list[7] and made use of it in the Prometheus score.

C	Red
C sharp	Violet
D	Yellow
D sharp	Steel
E	Pearly white (also called moonshine, frost, bluish purple)
F	Dark red
F sharp	Blue
G	Rosy Orange
G sharp	Violet purple
A	Green
A sharp	Steel (the glint of metal)
B	Pearly blue

Coincidently -- and on this occasion there are no grounds for claiming a connection -- as Scriabin composed Prometheus in Moscow A. Wallace Rimington (who also died the same year as Scriabin)

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6 Morgenstern, Composers on Music, p. 317.

7 Bowers, Scriabin, Volume II, p. 205.

wrote a book (now long out of print) at the School of Fine Arts in the University of London called Colour Music: The Art of Mobile Colour. Rimington built a colour-organ with a piano-like keyboard. But his intention was to develop and explore colour as a medium of aesthetic invention independently of either music or painting as such. However, his comments and insights regarding the correlation of sound and colour are worthy of note.

Rimington begins where Macdowell stops when he notes that both colours and sounds are dependent on vibratory activity in nature apprehended by a perceiver. He adds to this the reflection that practically all impressions of pleasure and pain, beauty and ugliness, interest and dullness, are dependent on the organs of sight and hearing, the only two senses to have developed into art forms.

Western music is based on the octave. And what is an octave? Consider any recognizably regular air vibration. This is regarded as a note. Double the vibratory speed and another note is heard regarded as the octave of the first note. Next consider the spectrum band of white light as an octave of light. The fact to bear in mind is that, like the sound octave, the frequency of the violet end of the spectrum is almost double that of the red. Rimington has developed this correspondence by way of the following chart.

Light freq. Mil. Mil. Sec.	395	433	466	500	533	566	600	633	666	700	733	757	INVIS 1026
Colour	Deep Red	Crim-son	Orange Crim-son	Orange	Yel-low	Yellow-Green	Green	Blue Green	Tur-quoise	Indigo	Deep blue	Violet	
Note	Middle C	C Sharp	D	D Sharp	E	F	F Sharp	G	G Sharp	A	A Sharp	B	C
Sound vibrations/ Sec.	256	277	298	319	341	362	383	405	426	447	469	490	512

'All that it is wished to show,' writes Rimington, 'is that, recognizing the musical octave as the physiological basis of music, there is a corresponding octave of colour with its lowest and highest points also separated by a proportionate increase of speed of vibrations.'[8]

As the violet of the colour spectrum tends more and more to the darkness that marks the limit of our visual capacities, it becomes increasingly purple before it fades beyond sight. Now purple is a mixture of blue and red. Thus the dark end of the spectrum tends to increasing proportions of red in its composition. One cannot avoid the speculation that were the eyes susceptible to vibrations beyond those of violet, the impression of red would again present itself, just as the repetition of similar notes in a succeeding octave of music. In like manner, the red end of the spectrum tends toward carmine before fading: that is, presents a proportion of blue in the red. This too suggests a return to the violet octave.

Although Rimington and Scriabin did the pioneer work for colour and sound synchronization, a glance at their respective tables reveals that they did not agree as to any colours of any notes except the red middle C they adopted as their starting points. Rimington obtained his scheme by retaining the proportion between vibrations of notes and frequencies of coloured lights. Scriabin, however, reasoned differently: he thought that if notes have correlate colours, then those colours nearest each other in the spectrum are the correlates of those notes most closely related to each other as keys. Thus his chart is obtained by following the cycle of fifths: since red and orange are close colours, they for him become the correlates of the closest keys C and G, and so on.

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8 A. Wallace Rimington. Colour-Music: The Art of Mobile Colour (London: Hutchinson, 1912), p. 20.

All of this is very fine, and whether with Rimington and the mathematical proportionality model or with Scriabin's matching the physical logic of the spectrum, some results are deeply interesting; and certainly the hypothesis of note-colour correspondence is not without its intellectual excitement. But to think precise and infallible correlation is even possible to obtain systematically is sheer delusion. The vibrations of sound and light are too distantly at variance to support decisive proof for correspondence; and from a logical point of view, apples cannot be counted as pears; says Bowers, music cannot be processed through a chamber box of scientific mathematics to make a re-entry in the world as coloured light.[9]

Although Bowers does not give them, there are at least five reasons that account for the impossibility of attaining scientifically respectable correlations between notes and colours. First is the fact that the colour-faculty is uneducated: this means it is not only difficult to imagine colours, but also to remember (or 'carry' the impression of) colours actually seen. And perhaps owing to this, the colour vocabulary is not large, and it is mostly unfamiliar to people anyway: there are few conversations about colour that extend beyond the most elementary colour clashes or harmonies. Hence the correlations of the vague and few colour expressions and the relatively explicit and rich musical-auditory expressions can only be stated with an exactitude commensurate to that of the less articulated relatum. The second reason is the complement of the first, namely, that although memories of colours are unstable and describing them is hindered by a greatly limited vocabulary, the experienceable discrimination of colours is keen: there are in the neighbourhood of 8,000 colours. This aggravates the problem: there are no words to talk of what is experienced, and what colour words there are must be then notoriously imprecise.

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9 Bowers, Scriabin, Volume II, p. 205.

Thirdly, the diatonic scale of tempered instruments is not an effluence of natural law; it is a man-designed convention, an agreement made in history. As such, it is indeed presumptuous to suppose that whatever the connection sound has to colour is capable of the systematized expressability of so organic a relation as lightning and thunder, although the analogy is surely a tempting one on which to base speculation. Fourthly, music of the Eastern world, for example, is heard in the Western as quarter-toned. Not only does this emphasize the conventionality of the diatonic scale, but were colour correlations attempted in terms of the quarter-tone scale, it seems the difficulty would be doubled. As the correlations stand now, how much significant difference is there between Rimington's "blue-green" for G and "turquoise" for G sharp? (In fact, in his original chart, Remington has "bluish-green" with G and "blue-green" with G sharp! -- the alteration of terms is due to the present author.) And how clearly distinguished is Scriabin's "steel" with D sharp from "steel (the glint of metal)" with A sharp? And yet there is a great deal of difference between G and G sharp, and D sharp and A sharp. In a system of quarter-tones (wherein a trained ear can find the happy medium between D sharp and E natural, for example) the correlations to generally specified colours would be ridiculous in the face of the significant and subtle nuances of sound. Moreover, it is obvious that beginning the correlations at middle C, rather than at A or any other note, is arbitrary.

Fifthly, and lastly, is the fact that there are no enharmonics. Neither Rimington nor Scriabin take account of this in their theories about notes and colours. How Scriabin reconciled his understanding that there are no enharmonics with his colour-note chart -- or whether he was at all disconcerted with the inconsistency -- is not known. Both theories employ the nominalistic fallacy in regarding, for example, D sharp as 'the same as' E flat: neither of these notes

has an objectively defined, autonomous and self-sufficient existence. Walking to a piano and striking the black key on the right side of the paired group of black keys results in producing neither the note D sharp nor the note E flat. The fact is that there is a sound produced by this activity of walking to a piano and striking the said key. But the sound only becomes the note of either D sharp or E flat when a context is provided such that the sound acquires a meaning (significance) it did not possess in isolation. The context, of course, is tonality, wherein each sound transcends itself in establishing organic relationships to all other sounds. It is precisely this which accounts for the meaning of a note, for the black key to the right of the paired black keys will be heard as a leading note (and thus with a suggestion of expectancy) if the context of it is given as E minor, or heard as a dominant (with a suggestion of straightforwardness and resoluteness) if it is A flat major, or as a tonic if E flat major or minor, and so on. But there are no notes -- as there are no words -- outside the context of a given (or assumed) totality in which they are factors. 'The apparent sterility of discussions on the nature of intervals in music seems to arise from the fact that theorists are accustomed to try to arrive at conclusions from a consideration of sounds regardless of the context in which they are placed... In language, we define the meaning of words by an investigation of the works of the best authors in which such words occur. In music the only practical explanation of effects can be made by an investigation into the works of the great composers. It is useless to lay down laws from acoustical theory only.'[10]

Either Rimington and Scriabin thought him unworthy of comment, or, what is more likely, they just neglected to read him, for neither mentions J.J. Rousseau. Rousseau was an educator, philosopher,

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[10] T.H.Y. Trotter. Music and Mind (London: Methuen, n.d. and quoted in D.L. Bolinger. The Symbolism of Music (Ohio: Antioch U.P., 1941), p. 33

novelist, and dilettante musician -- his opera Le Devin du Village was praised even by Gluck -- who made his living as a music copyist. In 1753 he wrote the following lucid paragraph:[11]

> "There are no absurdities to which, in the arts, material observations have not given rise. In the analysis of sound, the same relations have been found as in that of light. Immediately they have been seized upon without regard for experience or reason. The sense of the system has been completely confused, and for want of knowing how to paint with their ears, people have presumed to sing with their eyes. I have seen the famous harpichord on which music may supposedly be made with colours. Not to recognize that the effect of colours is in their permanence while that of sounds is in their succession, is to be unaware of the workings of nature."

Rousseau develops this in a few paragraphs following in which he makes the obvious but often over-looked observation that nature gives colours at a glance and pleasure is derived therefrom by contemplation of the scene presented; whereas sound is given under 'the semblance of a unision' or more commonly by the pouring forth of successive tones. Nature 'inspires songs and not chords; she dictates melody and not harmony.'

This settles it. The error in the preceding is to fall into the nominalistic camp due to a slovenly disregard of (spatio-temporal) experience. Specifically, the mistake occurs immediately after the discussion of the chain of connections obtaining among music, mood and colour; the argumentative move from 'finding the right key for the idea of a composition' to divining correlations between colours and the 'notes ' of a chromatic scale is a positivistic and reductionist fallacy based on the analytic mistake that wholes are 'nothing but' the sum of their parts. The truth of the matter is quite otherwise, however, for the parts (that is, the notes) presuppose a whole (namely, a context) which, since it is not existen-

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11 Morgenstern, Composers on Music, p. 54.

tially dependent on any one of its parts, is not existentially dependent on the 'sum' of any or all of its parts. Thus the traditional 'fallacy of composition' is avoided. The truth of the matter is that the parts (notes) already presuppose the reality of the whole (tonal context). Whitehead has named the error of confusing factors and facts -- factors express but do not constiture facts -- the Fallacy of Misplaced Concreteness.[12]

Consider again, in the light of Rousseau's remarks, Scriabin's enterprize in Prometheus. It can only be described as the attempted temporalization of space; or, from the musical point of view, the Bergsonian spatialization of time. The artistic categories of painting and music are as distinct as the metaphysical categories of space and time. Now it is true that either one of the pair of categories can be translated as an additional dimension to the other one of the pairs: with respect to space and time, the four-dimensional Minkowskian world lines accomplish this. Thus time is seen here as a 'fourth dimension' for space, while both space and time are then viewed as factors in a scheme of generality embracing them both -- such a scheme for the possibility of spatio-temporal discrimination being called the 'extensive continuum.' The crucial point to notice in this theory of extension is that it is not each spatialized thing that is given another dimension so that it could be said that each thing endures in its fourth dimension. Rather, the theory maintains that what is understood as endurance or activity 'in time' is already a factor in the extensibility of anything which can be 'spatialized'. Note that in this manner it can be said that, although space and time are heteronomous (time being the evasion of the logical law that no subject can have contradictory predicates, while space is the evasion of the logical law that each predicate determines a unique subject), space expresses time, or alternatively, that time has a meaning in terms of space.

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12 A.N. Whitehead, Process and Reality (New York: MacMillan, 1929), p. 27.

Now it is just this principle that is applicable to synaesthesia: -- the correlation of sound to colour. Scriabin's error in the plans for Prometheus is to work out the colour suitable for each harmonic progression, or each chord as Rousseau said. This is like making each thing endure in its own time dimension. It is a wide generality desired in both cases, however. Just as 'temporality' is already included in the extensibility of anything that admits of 'spatialization', so colour is already a factor of the context of any serialized ordered sounds. In other words, colour is correlated to the total general tonality rather than to each progression or chord expressing this tonal context. Thus Rousseau is correct: colour achieves instantaneously what music does progressively. The translation of sound to colour -- or the expression of sound in terms of colour -- must pay respect to the conditions of space and time. On the basis of Rachmaninoff's reported conversation, Scriabin, in the working out of the details for his then projected Prometheus, seems to have wandered from the mark: for with Rachmaninoff and Rimsky-Korsakoff he spoke of the colours of keys, not notes. So for Prometheus he ought to have pondered the colour for the work. By the time of his writing Prometheus he had abandoned the use of the key signature. His compositions were not 'atonal', but their florid and extensive chromaticism made key signatures more of a nuisance than an assistance to writing. Prometheus, however, has the general tonality of F sharp major (which is the last full chord bellowed by full orchestra, piano and chorus) and the work is built on a chord of the fourth: B, F sharp, C sharp, G, D sharp, A.

Another coincidence to note in this context is that as Scriabin was finishing the Prometheus score and Rimington was writing his book on colour, Arnold Schoenberg was starting his Die glücklicher Hand, Op. 18 (1913). In this work the doctor of twelve-tone technique also uses lighting effects which are indicated in the score

itself. For instance, in one scene of this drama, Schoenberg indicates a parallel crescendo for the lightning and the (musical) storm; while in another, the faces of those who sing softly and with deep pity are to be bathed in green light.[13]

These works of Scriabin and Schoenberg can legitimately be regarded as the culmination of post-Wagnerian romaticism. Schoenberg, in Die glücklicher Hand (and generally throughout his career), worked in the context of the Gesamkunstwerk, the composite work of art uniting all the arts (vocal, dramatic, musical and pictorial). Wagner's is the first indication of the art work becoming a container wherein various effects 'take their place'. This is not without similarity to Schoenberg's final formulation of the twelve-tone technique. Scriabin, on the other hand, thought that the 'composite work of art' was not to bring together various art forms. For to do so precludes realization of the full potential of each form individually. He thought the composite art work was to bring together -- organically, and to each other's enhancement -- religion, philosophy and music. He died while working on sketches for such a work, The Mysterium.[14] Hence Prometheus is best seen, unlike Die glücklicher

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13 Willi Reich. Schoenberg: A Critical Biography, Trans. L. Black (London: Longman, 1971) p. 82.

14 The Mysterium was to unite philosophy, religion and music. It was to be performed in India, near the Himalayas, in a single-arched temple-theatre surrounded by water, so that with the temple's reflection The Mysterium would appear in a sphere. The work was to last seven days, at the end of which time man was to be born again, born into the spirit and unattached to the material world. The Mysterium was to instruct in this matter. Scriabin entitled the beginning of this grand work, "The Prefatory Action"; he left 30 pages of poetic text, and 53 pages of musical sketches. A young and brilliant Russian musician, Alexander Nemtin, in 1973 completed Scriabin's own sketches and produced Part I of "The Prefatory Action", which he calls Universe. It has been recorded by Kiril Kondrashin with the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra and the Yuvlov Chorus of the R.S.F.S.R. (Angel/ Melodiya SR-40260).

Hand, as not only the culmination, but a refinement, of the Wagnerian character in a direction not taken by Schoenberg. Like the twelve-tone master, Scriabin felt an urge for a principle operable musically that was to transcend the conventionalized parametres of tonal expression. He found it in the idea of a single and complex chord which can serve as the basis for a composition by becoming transposed and horizontalized, as it were. Schoenberg, on the other hand, based compositions on a single series of notes which could be 'verticalized'. There is no intrinsic reason why Scriabin's idea has no histrorical successors, while Schoenberg's has become so historically significant. Perhaps it was because Scriabin died so young and had not met students equalling his remarkable insight. Schoenberg was fortunate enough to find disciples in the persons of Anton Webern and Alban Berg.

In the final analysis, then, what is the status of synaesthesia? Is it to be written off as a musician's quirk, so that concurrently it is to be denied there are connections among colour, mood and sound? Extended deliberation and unstrained introspection will ultimately issue in a definite response of No to the latter query. As for the status of synaesthesia (or audition colorée, as it is sometimes referred to), its legitimacy as a perceptive power of the human organism, it is probably best to put the issue cautiously in a socratically negative context since the essay proceeds under the disadvantage of offering neither a philosophy of mind nor a discussion of ontology that would adequately ground the adoption of a positive position with regard to the status of synaesthesia. Therefore it is

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14 (continued)
Nemtin continues his labour of love: the ramainder of the 'Prefatory Action' (with soloists and chorus) is scheduled for completion this year and performance in 1977.

most appropriate to embrace here the view of Rudolf Arnheim, a gestalt psychologist, and endorse the following[15] as the most that can be granted under existing limitations: although audition colorée is imprecise in formalization (especially, too, with the hundreds of colours currently synthetically produced), there is no known evidence establishing that it is i) merely contigently associative, ii) physiological or iii) subjectively imposed, since the reasonable hypothesis is open that consonance and dissonance are organically perceived as tensions obtaining among factors within an entire field -- a field that is always more than a merely multitudinous aggregate of parts.

This is not a new position. Perhaps it was felt by Camille Sant-Saens when he wrote, 'Non, la musique n'est pas un insturment de plaisir physique. La musique est un des produits les plus delicats de l'esprit humain. Dans les profondeurs de son intélligence, l'homme possède un sens intime spécial, le sens esthétique, par lequel il percoit l'art; la musique est un des moyens de mettre ce sens en vibration.'[16] And Eaglefield Hull, an early biographer of Scriabin, writes, 'The right connection, however, between colour and music must be rather on psychic lines.....The common mistake, however, is to imagine that the known physical laws and rules produce the result. This is not the case of practical experience, however.'[17]

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15 R. Arnheim. "Colours -- Irrational and Rational", JAAC Winter, 1974, pp. 149-53.

16 Quoted in A. Eaglefield Hull. Scriabin. (London: Kegan Paul, 1927), p. 216.

17 IBID, p. 228.

2. EXPERIENCE: THE LOWLIEST ART FORM

The ultimate appeal, naturally, is to experience. Thomas Reid, in his Inquiry into the Human Mind (Ch. VI, sec. II), recounts the story of the man blind from birth who enquired of someone of normal vision whether the colour scarlet was not something like the blare of a trumpet. Now of course the entities -- the blare and the colour -- are entertained by the blind man in two different manners: the former intrudes itself upon a mind that would be otherwise occupied in the absence of the blare and in one sense at least prods the mind merely to acknowledge its being before an auditor. The latter too prods acknowledgement of its presence, but unlike the blare, it is a presence brought to the occasion of experience by the auditor and for which, also unlike the blare, he is ready to take responsibility. In other words, when confronted by a blaring trumpet, the blending of the feeling of this sound with the idea of scarlet is one way an organism can make sense of its experience. On a Peircean phenomenology of mind the trumpet blare for the auditor is a secondary sign for the colour scarlet, since the connection brought to the experience must have had its origin in the liklihood that tones are signs for visceral qualities of feeling. That is, red is an instance of a quality of feeling whose power it is to be the way in which an object for experience comes to be actually experienced. In short, qualities of feeling (what are commonly called sensa, and including what are grammatically designated as adjectives and adverbs) answer the question, how?

Sound and scent are closer in type than sound and sight. This is elaborated below. But some lines of Peirce are helpful here.[18]

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18 Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, Volume I-VI, Ed. C. Hartshorne and P. Weiss. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1931-34), Volume I, pp. 156-7. Italics in original.

> 'It is a common observation that odors bring back old memories... Odors have a remarkable tendency to presentamate themselves, that is to occupy the entire field of consciousness, so that one almost lives for a moment in a world of odor. Now in the vacuity of this world, there is nothing to obstruct the suggestions of association. This is one way, namely by continguous association, in which odors are particularly apt to act as signs. But they also have a remarkable power of calling to mind mental and spiritual qualities. This must be an effect of resemblance - association, if under resemblance - association we include all natural associations of different ideas. I certainly would do this; for I do not know what else resemblance can consist in.
>
> 'A lady's favourite perfume seems to me somehow to agree with that of her spiritual being... Of the only two I have known to use rose (perfume), one was an artistic old virgin, a grande dame; the other a noisy young matron and very ignorant; but they were stangely alike..... Surely there must be some subtle resemblance between the odor and the impression I get of this or that woman's nature?'

How can a trumpet be heard-redly? How does Peirce perceive a woman's character? - odorously? (no pun). Note the process of the experience. (1) The sound and the odor are called 'physical feelings'[19] and modify the appropriate organs. (2) A connection is discovered between diverse entities, namely the physical feeling and the person in this case. A discriminating mind makes the discovery by possessing what Peirce calls 'the requisite degree of susceptibility to all natural associations of different ideas'. (3) This discovered connection is transferred to the physical feeling as a feature of it. (4) So the physical feeling -- when it attains the status of conscious human experience -- is called a feeling physically felt. Human experience of the world is a process of feeling the primary physical feelings.

Item (3) above is another example of the part-whole relation where the part expresses the reality of the whole it presupposes.

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19 The term is A.N. Whitehead's as found in Process and Reality and Adventures of Ideas.

It is the immediate recognition of the whole when in the presence of a part that constitues that "feeling of inevitability" about how, for example, a musical phrase is "going to" end. If our souls were subtle enough, we all could see through all parts to their wholes. Then the slightest gestures people make or whatever bodily features they possess would become signs for us of their whole character. As it is, however, insight into such things comes at best intermittently; and even then our conscience seems to shy away from it, mumbling something about "occult".

Materialistic philosophies call a feeling physically felt the 'qualification of a substance by an attribute'. The consequent division of experience into elements of primary and secondary natures have left the former unknowable and the latter mere collections of universals stamped on a tabula rasa. The theory mentioned here is an alternative to the sensationalist doctrine, and seeks a scope of application wide enough to embrace synasesthetic perception as well as so-called ordinary perception. The motivation for formulating an alternative arises from an often ignored observation on the experience of an art work. The observation is that not only can the objects for perception be prescribed, but also the way or manner in which these objects will be felt by the sensitive observer.[20] In other words, artists manipulate affective tones by an adjustment of the objects for experience. And unless it were the case that the pattern of sensa qualifying an object is also the component of the manner in which the object is experienced -- unless, that is, the so-called attributes of a thing are shared also by the affective tone of its perception -- just gazing at the colours or listening to the sounds without comprehending shapes or musical form, and so on -- how else is this to be accounted for? The conditioning of an extensive region by affecting

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20 Cf. Wilson Coker. Music and Meaning: A Theoretical Introduction to Musical Aesthetics. (New York: Free Press, 1972) p. 22.

tone -- so-called experience with the senses -- is thus the consciously primitive art form. A sensationalist epistemology cannot explain the crudest aesthetic delight because it embraces the mistaken dogma that there is sensation without an accompanying form for the power of reception.

The theory of perception merely sketched here denies the capability of the sensationalist dogma to explain experience. (This alternate theory is anything but a new one. It is Plato's, and found in A.N. Whitehead, whose Process and Reality will be seen as the most significant philosophical achievement of the twentieth century.) This theory, besides having the advantage of grounding its doctrine in an empirical and critical investigation of the deliverances of experience, also avoids the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. There are no 'hard, stubborn, simple' facts -- at least the things referred to in this naive phrase are not facts which are hard, stubborn, or even 'bare'. They are factors of experiential happenings that transcend any and all of them. This organic analysis of perception may be the key to the reunion of science, psychology, and philosophy: this theory is the critic of the scientific metaphysics which harbours the corpuscular theory of matter in simple location; it obviously bears striking resemblance to gestalt psychology which has no delusions as to the experiencability of a 'series of impressions of sensation'; and it rescues modern philosophy from its drastically unreflective belief in analytic-linguistic truth. Philosophy has a crucial role in the world: it is the critic of naive common sense.

It is interesting to note that the discussions of synaesthesia and connections obtaining among mood and key are suggestive of the evolutionism advanced by Peirce, namely, that the fivefold division among kinds of 'qualia' corresponding to the fivefold division of the sensory apparatus is a specialization of a unified and generally undifferentiated qualia-system: 'We can hardly but

suppose that those sense-qualities that we now experience, colours, odors, sounds, feeling of every description, loves, griefs, surprise, are but the relics of an ancient and ruined continuum of qualities, like a few columns standing here and there in testimony that have some old-world forum with its basilica and temples had once made a magnificient ensemble.'[21] On one occasion Aldous Huxley wrote a scabrous article in which he referred to Scriabin as 'the voluptuous dentist'.[22] Huxley probably regretted this, for after his drug experiments he sought the combination of sensory experiences of which Scriabin had already been conscious by alternate means.

Now there is an important feature about the above observation on the aesthetic experience that will help clarify the distinction to maintain between painting and music. It was said that the artist, by adjusting the objects for experience, manipulates the affecting tone -- the feelings attending the perception of the object. In this situation, the ideas derived from the physical feeling of the experienced object evoke requisite affective tones. This is precisely the contrary effect of sounds and odors: for in these cases, the affective tones derived from the physical feelings of the objects evoke the requisite ideas. In a word, the ideas derived from sight communicate an emotion of some degree of generality (or specificity), while the emotions derived from sound communicate an idea of some degree of generality (or specificity). Literature and painting have subjects -- like heroes and vases -- and music has predicates -- like languor or gaiety. Literature that is concerned with predicates as much (or less than) subjects is called poetry; and music that is concerned with subjects as much as (or in some cases less than) predicates is called programme music (whose logical extension is onomatopoeia).

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21 Collected Papers of Peirce, Volume VI, p. 135.

22 A. Huxley. Essays Old and New. New York: Harper, 1926. Also a reference thereto in Bowers, Scriabin, Volume I, p. 79.

Their coadunation is called opera -- Wagner's Gesamkunstwerk -- which the theory of art here under discussion seems to regard as an unfortunate compromise of each of the art forms involved: painting's essential significance -- the revelation of pathos in that which is immediately present -- is lost when elongated by the comparatively slow unfolding of the music; poetry is burdened by making references to the subject (plot) of the situation -- and hence libretti are often criticized as being weak, unlyric, or melo-dramatic; and music abdicates form in preference for motivic transformations and repetitive rhythms that refer to recurring scenes or symbolic suggestions of the libretto.

Illustrative of this distinguishing characteristic of painting and music is the case of Wagner; for that matter it is the case of opera generally, which is likely Wagnerian in essence. Be this as it will, it does seem that the relationship between sound and action is more direct than that between sight and action. And the feelings from sound are closer to the mainspring of action than are the ideas of sight -- Hamlet thinks and hesitates, Othello feels and acts. What is seen suggests, in general, thoughts and fantasies of various sorts; whileas what is heard suggests emotions. (Of course, music suggests thoughts as well, but if it does so too explicitly it likely is regarded as not very good music.) Maybe Plato knew what he was talking aobut when he said there is such a thing as immoral music. There just might be a connection between fifty years of listening to the music of Wagner and the operatic diplomacy of the German officials at the start of the first world war. And July of 1933 was the fiftieth anniversary of Wagner's death. It was celebrated in Bayreuth by the performing of six operas in eight days: the four of the Ring, Meistersinger, and Parsifal. Adolf Hitler attended them all, sitting in Wagner's box in the Festspielhaus. He had only been in power since January of 1933 but already travelled

from the theatre to the restaurant and back between double rows of soldiers. One cannot help but wonder how he felt and what he thought about those operatic heroes as he sat there day after day, performance after performance. Less than a year later Germany groaned under Hitler's first blood-purge. Does Wagner's music about legendary super human heroes instill dreams of power leading to acts of violence? Hitler was deeply interested in a mystical society called the Aryans who claimed to be descended from a master race dwelling deep in the bowels of the earth, and their hitherto frustrated mission was to enslave the intellectually feeble inhabitants of the surface. How dramatic. But, on the other hand, who is to know? Americans listen to Wagner now without any indication of a philosophical perversion that goes any farther than what they can claim as their own.

Consider music as ceremony, nationalistic or religious. Here the conveyance of ideas linguistically expressable is surely at a minimum, while the eliciting of affective tones is at its height. The strength of music is its interpretation of a strong feeling (loosely, emotion), patriotic, military, religious, or otherwise profound. It does this by providing (in these obvious cases cited) an emotional appeal that alters the dimly apprehended general reality into a clear appearance conformal to the affective tones deemed suitable for its conscious experience. Considered in itself, this ability is neither moral or immoral -- or it is both. Nonetheless, art is able, by adjusting itself to the nature of human perception,[23] to be an indirect interpretive agency expressing truth about the nature of things. Naturally, it does so at a price: the essence of art is to be artificial: it brings the virtually unconscious connections of possibility into contrast with settled matters, thereby making the dimly illuminated reality a clear and conscious appearance.

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23 Susanne Langer. Philosophy in a New Key. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 235.

The power of art thus lies in its immediacy, for, as Whitehead says, it makes the Judgment Day always with us -- that is, art is the demonstration of the possibilities to be reaped by mankind now.

It is in the light of the above that several of Peirce's remarks on aesthetics are to be understood. He writes:[24] 'For normative science in general being the science of the laws of conformity of things to ends, esthetics considers those things whose ends are to embody qualities of feeling, ethics those things whose ends lie in action, and logic those things whose end is to represent something.' Whether, that is, the arts based on sight or sound are considered, and although they are distinguished in the manner already cited, their final significance, one way or another, is the adjustment of feeling in the beholder by presentation of the appropriate configurations of their mediums.

And surely it is false that nothing follows from feeling. The drastic case of Hitler and Wagner need not be raised again, for the continuation of feeling into activity and thought is directly experienced by all living organisms. Sometimes the feeling evokes activity without prompting intermediary ratiocination: this is most commonly the case in ordinary visual perception wherein intellectual ferment is not required to avoid collision with a perceived tree. Also, if one is walking in a forest, it is likely the feeling evoked by the peaceful greenery as a whole that (usually unconsciously) suggests one's comfortable walkingpace. In other situations, though, thought in various intensity is predominant and the inclination to action if minimal: for instance, one initiates a study of Liszt's piano technique after being especially taken by a virtuoso piece. (Of course even a study or investigation of this sort can be regarded as an activity.) But the point is that in this case there is conscious thought intervening between the aesthetic enjoyment of the piece and

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[24] Collected Papers, Volume V, p. 82.

whatever the activity resulting therefrom. The canons of fine art are principles for action because feeling is fundamental in experience.

Thus, although aesthetics is normative in Peirce's sense, its distinction from other normative disciplines ought not be regarded as rigid. The distinctions indicate the general concern of each of the studies. That they do coalesce in experience, however, is an observation Peirce did not overlook: 'It seems to me that while in aesthetic enjoyment we attend to the totality of Feeling -- and especially to the total resultant Quality of Feeling presented in the work of art we are contemplating -- yet it is a sort of intellectual sympathy, a sense that here is a Feeling that one can comprehend, a reasonable feeling. I do not succeed in saying exactly what it is, but it is a consciousness belonging to the category of Representation, though representing something in the category of Quality of Feeling.'[25]

Peirce's reasonable feeling or intellectual sympathy is the phenomenon of 'feeling a feeling'. Obviously no art work offers the 'real' feeling it represents or embodies: a composer cannot write an anger-filled aria if he himself is angry, and the listener-spectator does not become angry upon experiencing this aria. The listener feels the angry feeling in some manner: in the opera's context the anger might be unjust, directed at an undeserving character, and felt by the listener with deep tragedy and sympathy and so on for the accused. And that is art's essence and beauty: it affords man understanding of the mainly unconscious workings of his feelings by bringing forward for conscious discrimination the situations (or configurations, generally, of a given artistic medium) indicating feeling at one step removed, the feeling of the feeling. 'Our pleasure then is a recognition of the truth of the emotions portrayed, not an emotional vibration in sympathy with them. It is in fact a form of knowledge. What gives it a deceptive appearance of emotion is its sensuous quality. It is knowledge sensuously conveyed.'[26]

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25 IBID, p. 73. Italics in original.

26 Frank Howes. Music and Its Meanings. (London: Athlone Press, 1958), p. 37.

Beethoven illustrates:[27]

> Goethe visited him, and Beethoven played to him. When he saw that Goethe seemed to be deeply moved, Beethoven said: "Sir, I did not expect this from you. Several years ago I gave a concert in Berlin; I had made a great effort, and thought that I had done well. I expected some decent applause, but when I had expressed my utmost enthusiasm, not the slightest sign of applause was forthcoming. That was really too much for me; I could not understand it....But the riddle was solved when the whole Berlin public, being fashionably educated, staggered towards me with tear-sodden handkerchiefs to express their appreciation. To a crude enthusiast like myself this was quite irrelevant; I saw that I had a romantic but not an artistic audience. But to have this from you, Goethe, does not please me.... You must know yourself how stimulating it is to gain the applause of hands one respects. If you will not recognize me as your equal, who will? To what pack of ragamuffins must I play to be understood?"

That is 'reasonable feeling', art as insight concerning the nature of mind: to be felt, yes, felt in order thereby to know.[28] 'Music has import and this import is the pattern of life as it is felt and directly known...' and essentially untranslatable to the common thing-oriented vocabulary of Western Indo-European language.[29]

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27 Bettina von Arnim writing Prince Hermann von Puckler-Muskau, and quoted in Josef Rufer, Composition with Twelve Notes (London: Barnie and Rockliff, 1952), p. 6.

28 P.D. Ouspensky's teaching is that possibilities of real knowing lie in the emotional, and not the intellectual, centre. He says we presently have little or no control over emotional functions: we cannot be glad or angry without a cause, and a cause here means to be identified with some external thing. Ouspensky knows that there will come a time in the evolution of man's consciousness when enlightenment both of civilization and individuality will have its source in the emotional centre because it is that which has the most energy and creative power. In this age, though, the intellect must be fully developed, for it is the auxiliary power to emotion, and prepares the way for the heightening of consciousness. (See Ouspensky's The Fourth Way, translated by T.M. Forman. (New York: Vintage Books, 1957) pp. 61, 73.)

A corollary is that in the aesthetic experience the feelings brought to the situation are not to be confused with the feelings symbolized by the work of art, though it is also true that these former feelings are not to be ignored; but it must be recognized they are not the essence of the art work. An artistic mind is able to experience the music of Debussy, for example, and remark about the quality and refinement and sonority, etc., while consistently admitting that it is not only not a favourite, but seldom is lastingly pleasing any more: its refinement and technical achievements, the Impressionist reflection of the French era wherein it was composed, are understood and appreciated accordingly, but refinement and Impressionist skill in today's American era may be regarded by a critical mind as incongruous with the epoch. The judgment of preference is not to impair the judgment of the music itself. Music is indifferent to preference; it becomes pleasing only if it is good for men. But some pleasures, as noted in subsequent chapters, are anything but a healthy requirement in some cultural epochs.

There is a sort of Puritan interpretation that some might place on Beethoven's remarks: a plea for the purging of the passions. At this point it is wise to recall another of Beethoven's remarks, this time concerningthe cavatina of his B flat Quartet, Op. 130: 'Never has my own music made such an impression on me; even to remember this piece always costs me a tear.' Beethoven correctly realized that knowledge is a harmony of the mental faculties: over-reliance on reason issues in mechanical music contrived according to the logic of some set of rules, while the preponderance of emotion at its present level of development generates a fantasy of feeling types that lose their effectiveness in the anarchic matrix remaining as the aftermath of a dearth of form. He expected much mental poise from Goethe concerning the music he played for him; Beethoven himself had such equilibrium. One of the deepest musical prayers in the

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[29] S. Langer. Form and Feeling (London: Routledge, 1953), p. 32.

literature, known by the intimacy of first-hand experience, and it costs Beethoven 'a tear'! Not many, just one, one so human tear. Beethoven likely reasoned that if his audience weeps that much, they must be weeping for the wrong reasons; if they understood him, they would be transported to realms beyond such a showing. Plato also knew that human affairs are serious, but never so desperate that wailing is the right form of their reception. Perhaps, though, Goethe understood this already and Beethoven marshalled his austere public self to a hasty conclusion: Goethe might have been overwhelmed by the scene of the deaf genius at the keyboard playing the soft passages of some of his best pieces so gently that no actual sound issued from the instrument, while he continued, oblivious to this, hearing it as he had all his great works: in the silence of his mind.

Dialectical feeling, as feeling of a feeling can be named, has another corollary, namely one that shatters the platitudinous formula about philosophers and artists. The standard characterization (or caricature, more accurately) is that the former revel dispassionately in the cold luminosity of pure reason and the latter change with the season of the passions. Understanding the arts to be a mode of knowledge, and not a mere emotion-teaser, reveals that the great artist (like Beethoven) understands the principles of feeling and would very likely endorse Peirce's insight that aesthetics is normative in that sense. Now if a performer were unable to undergo (consciously or not) dialectical feeling, how could he announce a programme in advance?: he would only 'play what he felt like'. A philosopher must first feel for the principles in the nature of things because these principles are not intellectually deducible from any particular phenomenon given him by consciousness.

This discussion can best continue as a brief analysis of a short scene from the Merchant of Venice.[30] Imagine the setting: stars

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30 Act V, Sc. I, Lines 50ff. Also quoted in F.M. Cornford Unwritten Philosophy (New York: Cambridge, 1950). Cornford is not responsible for the use here made of the quotation.

jewel the deep blue country heavens, and moonlight caresses the soft banks of a meadow's crystal stream. A gentle wind wanders among trees and strokes the brows of two newly-married lovers:

Lorenzo (to Jessica)

Sweet soul , let's in, and there expect their coming.
And yet no matter - why should we go in?
My friend, Stephan, signify, I pray you,
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;
And bring your music forth into the air.
How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Becomes the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit Jessica; look, how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings;
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it....

Jessica

I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

Lorenzo

The reason is your spirits are attentive:
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood;
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music. Therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees,
Stones, and floods;
Since nought so stockish, hard, and full or rage
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons stratagems, and spoils;

The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted.

Jessica

(no answer)

Lorenzo

Mark the music.

Jessica is by now lying upon the green turf, charmed to quiet by Lorenzo's discoursing on Pythagorean harmonies of stars and souls. She dreams, ever deeper, first lulled by words, then the music's strains, then the silence -- then, finally, by the silence of her husband. She would have it that time would be no more: 'Dear Lorenzo. How familiar and strange he looks in the moon-light, and how much he knows about the stars. It is time we went in to prepare a welcome for Portia. He was telling me so only a moment since. But then he said "and yet no matter, why should we go in?" and sent for the musicians to come out and play to us. So be it; no matter, then; Portia is in love herself and she will surely forgive us. It is good to lie here and listen to him talking about -- what is he talking about?'

For Lorenzo pauses. Tells Jessica only to mark the music -- she is filled with feeling, taking in everything he fain would attire in chosen words. The words to her are without their meanings; only their sounds reverberate in the calm of her feelings of the evening.

Lorenzo looks neither at the stars nor at her. His mind is with the Hall's candle guiding the mistress Portia to her home. Yet he does not actually see this light. The music fills his ears, too; but if for Jessica it is love's nutrition, for Lorenzo it is food for thought: he thinks of Orpheus and the mathematical philosophy of the venerable Pythagoras. He dwells for now in a world foreign to her. Jessica watches her love's transfixed eyes and reclines upon the earth like mother Earth herself; Lorenzo thinks on another lighted candle:

that of ancient wisdom glowing in the darkness of ignorance.

Now, who has chosen the better lot? And theirs is not the contrast of contemplation and action, for they have both relinquished their practical duties of the house to listen to the musicians outdoors. Rather theirs is the choice between active and passive contemplation. The question then is, does Lorenzo gain or lose by speculating on that which Jessica is satisfied to enjoy unreflectively?

The key to the answer requires dialectical thinking: there is to be thought about thought. We must think about how we think, while keeping in mind of what we think. Consider insight or revelation. It does not present itself as formalized; it comes as a seething mass of significance, all aglow. And concentration is intent upon it to try to draw out its implications. It is the relatively well-marked delimitations of concentration on a subject, excluding even the awareness of external happenings, that prompts the (false) opinion that the mind is an entity composed of discriminated faculties. But the insight did not arrive in separation from intellect, feeling, or even sense-perception. On the contrary, revelation wondrously fuses these together in a remarkable fashion that is its almost mystical characteristic. Concentration, after the presentation of the insight, is an emphasis on one of the factors conditioning the intensity of the insight given. Thus extended concentration on revelation produces a thought about what was revealed, and often the thought neglects the other factors contributory to the entrance of insight into experience in the first place. All thought is then to some degree an abstraction from a richer and more fundamental mode of experience.

> 'To want substance in cognition [i.e., to want the freely given context of a formal thought to submit to, and be exhausted by, the categories ascribed to conscious mentality] is to want a utopia. It is this consciousness of possibility that sticks to the concrete, the undisfigured. Utopia is blocked off by possibility, never by immediate reality; this is why it seems abstract in the midst of extant things. The inextinguishable colour comes from nonbeing. Thought is its servant, a piece of existence extending -- however negatively -- to that which is not. The utmost distance alone would be proximity; philosophy is the prism in which its colour is caught.'[31]

The thought and the thing thought about are of course distinguishable but obviously not separated. This is revealed by interruption: when summoned from deep reverie or intent concentration, the subsequent return to meditation or analysis often discloses that the insight contemplated or the problem attempted has made some advance of its own, become more clear, taken on another dimension. Also this donates a conformal mood facilitating renewed activity. Beauty inspired Pythagoras; his formulation of the mathematical ratios of music could never have been initiated by the exclusivity of intellectual logic. Revelation by music is invested with the power to wed dialectically intellect and feeling.

Like Lorenzo and Jessica, Pythagoras taught that truth and beauty are always discovered together. Their modes of apprehension, however, are not the same. Before truth we are like Jacob: I will not let thee go except thou bless me; before beauty we are to be humble and tranquil: Be it unto me according to thy word. In this manner, feelings, with which fine art deals, gains a depth of intensity preventing relapse into triviality; and philosophy gains the adequacy of systematization from insights into modes of appropriateness obtaining among diverse factors within experience. Artist and philosopher: if not both, neither.

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31 Theodor W. Adorno. Negative Dialectics. (New York: Seabury Press, 1973), pp. 56-7.

Two considerations to offer before passing to a discussion of Schoenberg and Stravinsky. The first concerns 'interpretation'; the second the use of the terms subjective and objective. Merely on the basis of the foregoing, it is presumably anticipated that the elucidation of 'interpretation' is designed to analyse a generic notion covering what is commonly expressed as resemblance, association, reflection, and/or expression. Succinctly, two modes of experience are said to interpret each other when there is a common factor of experience in the manifestation of either mode. This common factor is the reason for the transition from one mode to the other. Thus it also can be said that either mode of experience interprets (or expresses) the common factor. Therefore even the taken-for-granted sense-perception is interpretive: for what is perceived is (under the doctrines presented here) as expressive of a factor in the genetic character of the percipient as it is expressive of the idea or feeling it evokes via the percipient. (In standard terminology, this means there are no 'facts' destitute of reference to 'value'. Hence, as Caudwell notes,[32] there can be no 'scientific argument' without (at the least, a pre-supposed) value-judgment.)

Language written and spoken, for example, is rudimentarily a series of squiggles and squeaks. In themselves, the squeaks and squiggles are categoreally different from the meanings attending them. There is only one sense in which a sound can be said to 'have' a meaning as a word (or as a note in music), and that is symbolically.[33] 'A musical phrase or even a tone has, as any musician or layman interested in music knows, many possible kinds of signification and significance -- i.e., "meaning"....Moreover.... all signi-

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[32] Caudwell. Illusion and Reality, p. 147

[33] Langer. Philosophy in a New Key, pp. 218, 245.

fication and meaning involve an affective (i.e., "emotional") component, because all sensory perception, the cognition and recognition of stimuli as significant, brings attitudes and affective processes into play.'[34]

The interpretive character of language is thus dual. On the one hand it presents a wonderful appropriateness between the symbol and the thing symbolized. Consider sounds such as the long E. It miraculously conveys the spatial suggestion of slightness, and this seems to account for the vowel used exclusively in some contexts as a stylized superlative: witness words like "tiny", "wee", "ittie bittie","teeny". This notion of spatial slightness is carried metaphorically to words of endearment: witness the diminutives like "Johnny", "Billy", "honey", and so on.

On the other hand, the vocabulary someone employs -- even in writing -- reveals whether one is dealing with the intellect of a heavy-weight boxer or a thoughtful artist. Language thus interprets (or expresses) both ideas and the 'expressor'. From another point of view, it is the language-utterer that interprets the language in terms of the ideas and feelings evoked by the squeaks and squiggles; also the language-utterer interprets ideas and feelings in terms of the familiar squiggles and squeaks. 'Consciousness (in the sense of awareness of one's self or discursive mental activity) is not necessary on the part of organisms in a social situation in order for meaning to arise. The mechanism of meaning is present in the social act prior to the emergence of consciousness itself, and hence prior to one's consciousness of meaning. The adjustive response of the second organism to the gesture of the first within a social act constitutes the meaning of that gesture.'[35] It follows from the rejection of

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[34] Coker. Music and Meaning, pp. 2, 3.

[35] Coker. Music and Meaning, p. 14.

positivist-nominalistic dogma, that there are no entities in autonomous self-sufficient states, that there can be nothing both existent and non-interpretive of anything. Hence the theory of materialistis such as Hanslick[36], or writers such as Stravinsky[37], that music is non-interpretive or non-expressive is dismissed. Notice also that the belief that music is in essence self-expression of the artist meets a problem almost immediately. As Langer remarks[38], the history of music is the history of increasingly integrated and articulate forms; and sheer self-expression obviously requires no refinement of artistic form.

A result of this analysis of interpretation is to blur the traditional objective-subjective distinction. The subjective factor of experience is that causally independent nodal point marking the transformation of existentially vacuous possibility into qualifications conditioning matters for experience. The objective factor of experience has a dual realm. It is both that which, from the standpoint of the conscious subject, is felt physically; as well as the realm itself of unactualized possibilities. This dual character of the objective is united in the notion that the objective is that factor of experience resisting change and accepting alteration only by resigning itself to the appearance of perpetual perishing. Thus it becomes a moment (stage) of its own cause-effect dependence on otherness in the creative advance beyond itself.

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36 K.E. Gilbert & H. Khuhn, ed. A History of Aesthetics. (New York: Dover, 1972), p. 545.

37 Eric White. Stravinsky. (Los Angeles: U.C.L.A. Press, 1966) p. 520.

38 Philosophy in a New Key, p. 216.

3. INTERMEZZO -- COMMENTARY ON THE ESSAY

The reader in a few pages will be turned over to the worlds of twelve-tone technique and neo-classism. This intermezzo is concerned with meeting a possible objection regarding the form of the argument in this essay. The question one might think to raise is, what have the first two sections of this chapter to do with the ideas expressed in the Introduction and with the second and third chapters following?; is the whole of Chapter I a 'digression', perhaps?

It is indeed artless for an author to write on the strategy he uses in a work in the very work where he uses it, to supply his own commentary, as it were, or (to employ current jargon) to juxtapose meta-critical justification and criticism. But the reader might respond to the author that an academic work, such as this essay purports to be, is not to be artful; and so the author had best justify his methods and arguments and leave artful form either to other pieces of his or to the novelists and essayists. To this reflection the author sees himself to be in disagreement -- not because he is a misfit philosopher or a misfit writer, a misfit who cannot quite be either -- but in disagreement that one ought not attempt to be both. It is because he loves philosophy and understands a little art, wants to help salvage the power of human organization from capital-oriented corporations like universities, could not bear to see scholarship degenerate into medieval dogmatics or art into mere egoism or logic, and knows that buried in the heart of man is the spark of the divine that when kindled is the inner light with which to see the brotherhood of man and loving presence of the nameless in the unity of music, philosophy, and divinity -- it is because of all this and much more that the author cannot seriously separate relevant modern scholarship from true modern artistry. Until art becomes

critical and critical scholarship artistic the culture will produce nothing more than boring lecturers and academic and insufferably mundane artists. How can the current culture not do so?; for it has arrived at the stage where it realizes that art can no longer be the imitation of merely culturally defined 'representations' of the so-called factual world, that is 'material' or 'things' or even 'idols' found in the natural or conventional world. Fine, it realizes what it cannot do with any effect or gusto any longer. But what happens?: instead of raising imagination to smash the cultural thing-consciousness -- idle idolatry[39] -- modern man concludes rather that nothing now can legitimately be regarded as art that in any way is reminiscent of nature or historical artists who portrayed ties with nature. In fact the converse of this notion is not an uncommon position: namely, that anything can be regarded as art which does not have nature-insinuations. Yes, our culture knows the lesson of the masters: which is, Art can express only Man himself. Or in modern dress: art exists for the purpose of enabling Joe Smith to express his personality. The suspicious synonymy here arises because this cultural epoch does not understand -- even though relativity physics and the indeterminancy principle virtually shout it -- that nature herself is the representation of man. And the current culture's learned scholarship endorses this view of things because it largely labours under the limitations of an hereditary one-sided Platonism. This kind of Platonism would have a sharp boundary drawn between science as formal knowledge and art. It bases artistic activity on fantasy and would hope to represent scientific and formal knowledge as the outcome of a rational development of concepts free from flights of imagination.

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39 Cf. Owen Barfield. Romanticism Comes of Age. (Rudolf Steiner Press, 1944)

But true Platonism rejects this view, holding that the Idea is found in nature's processes and that the Idea there is like a jewel whose centre is one particular happening in nature but whose completeness embraces happenings beyond the space and time of its centre. In other words, the Idea points out beyond the object to related things. Now the scholarly or philosophical person takes hold of this idea-element and brings it to expression in a thought-creation, a philosophical system or an explanatory essay. And the idea-element works upon the artist too. That which is ideational in nature and revealed to the spirit becomes concrete in the art work. The artist incarnates the ideas of nature in forms which reveal externally and explicitly what was formerly implicit and hidden to all but the spirit of the artist. The scholar shows how nature or experience presents herself to the mind; the artist shows how nature would appear if she revealed her active ideas not only to the mind and spirit but also to perception in space and time. It is one and the same truth that the philosopher or scholar can present in the form of thought and the artist in the form of an image. The two differ only in their means of expression. And the unity of the original idea-element can better be expressed by the union of some of the aspects of these means for expression than if they were to remain rigorously separated.

Thus were the author here after the Introduction wherein Idea and musical material were brought together, to ignore this union and continue blithely in the prevalent modes of abstraction, himself paying no heed to his own criticism of 'dictatorship of the technique' and 'fetishism of the materials', nothing short of a self-mocking, culture-mocking manifest contradiction would arise throughout his entire essay, rightly condemning the author to the dilettantism of which he himself is critical and which his culture would surpassingly reveal only quantitatively and certainly not qualitatively, for right thought and sensitivity would be sorely lacking in both cases.

In the following chapter the reader will become acquainted with the three major assumptions about music composition procedure that Schoenberg makes. They are: i) that harmony can be conveyed as powerfully along a line as in a chord; ii) that harmonic tension can be displaced to a sort of melodically functioning line; iii) that the effect of harmonic dissonance can be reconstructed by the shape and texture of thematic lines. All of these assumptions are controversial, and by the end of the philosophic analysis it is hoped the reader sees them for what they are truly worth. Thus the greater part of this essay is critical and negative; even Chapter IV is a kind of lamentation of the non-efficaciousness currently unjustly victimizing music. And in part the above two sections of this Chapter are another criticsm of atonal music; for do not these sections, in conjunction with the final chapter, draw attention to the essential connection of perception, art, and civilization; and do the middle chapters not reveal that the modern music here discussed procedes as though this essential connection is non-existent; and can the reader then not see the implication of this essay: that art that does not take account of the experient whose nature is discussed above cannot be an art concerned with the quality of life or with deepening the spirit of civilization? But the above two sections imply also a positive dimension in this essay. Once more on pain of self-contradiction, the careful reader is aware that the present author cannot advocate as an alleviation of these discussed aspects of musical depravity a return to tonal music like that of Mozart and Haydn: this is reminiscent of the solution of neo-classicism, and the author rejects this solution below (especially Ch. II, sec. 3 and 4). It can be inferred that he is suggesting that the compositional procedures of Scriabin[40] are more positively contributory to

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40 See F. Bowers, The New Scriabin: Enigma and Answer. (New York: St. Martin's, 1973) Especially Ch. VIII: 'Harmonic System'.

the evolution of civilization than theories prevalent today.

This is an indication of the direction the reflective reader will take when (or if) he comes to consider the connection of these two sections above to the remainder of the essay.

CHAPTER II

CRITICAL EXPOSITION OF THE DOCTRINES OF SCHOENBERG'S TWELVE-TONE TECHNIQUE

1. STRUCTURE AND TOPIC

There is in some music today an element of profound vacuity not at all unlike, in fact, Hegel's unhappy self-consciousness that has freed content by its own emptiness.[1] This is to say, in part at least, that the transformation into mere material of the very elements of expression in music has become so extensive in some schools that the possibility of expression must now be called into question. Music, while (according to Schoenberg) pursuing inevitably its own inner logic throughout history,[2] alters itself from something once significant and persuasive to something else at first obscure or only momentarily pleasing and then becoming routine. Significant is, for example, the efficacy of the idea of humanity as such to hold sway within musical expression, or the thought of richer worlds for man, or the virtues of honesty, trust, devotion: witness Beetho-

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1 Phenomenology of Mind, trans. J.B. Baillie. (New York: Harper, 1967) p. 752.

2 J. Rufer. Composition with Twelve Notes. His Chapter II, entitled "The Development of Twelve-Note Music", traces the dissolution of tonality and the foreshadowing of the row technique through works by Debussy, Strauss, Reger, Hindemith, Bartok, and the early works of Schoenberg. Conceiving this mural of great men as an argument illustrative of the inevitable conscious emergence of twelve-tone technique as it is known today, Rufer concluded: 'This shows how right Schoenberg was when he said, in a lecture at the University of California in November, 1949, that he did not create the twelve-note method; it was there to be discovered, it simply had to be discovered, and he was only surprised that other composers also had not recognized this necessity.' (pp. 20-21; Rufer's italics)

ven's Fidelio. Obscurity at first results from not recognizing what ideas and feelings are guiding a composition. In part, the composer is responsible for this condition: he employs a musical symbolism unintegrated with the traditional musical vocabulary. Also, in part, the listener is responsible for the obscurity of modern music: listening has degenerated to mere hearing and new modes of expression are dismissed as noise -- unpleasant for the most part, except perhaps for a marked rhythm in some pieces. Obscurity, therefore, is a product of the composer's unfamiliar symbolism and the listener's inability to discern what is expressed. Reflection could alter this: the schools of Schoenberg and Stravinsky received their inspiration from the nature of modern man, his sufferings, his love, and his fate.[3] Thus obscurity in some modern music can be seen as the composer apprehending (consciously or not) the listener's inability to recognize his own and his era's portrait.

Musical form is the means by which advanced music can free itself from ubiquitous commercialism. Unfortunately, the strictness of musical structure has hardened this music to the point where it is now unaffected by the conditions responsible for its own development. The attempt to regain this kind of critical content for

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3 Fredric Jameson. Marxism and Form (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974). There is, of course, a difference of approach distinguishing these schools. Jameson writes: 'Thus, in a situation where subjective and objective have begun to split apart, Schoenberg's originality was to have driven the subjective and expressionistic to its outer limit, to the point at which the nerve-pictures and traumata of the latter slowly veer, under the pressure of their own internal logic, into the new objectivity, the more total order, of the twelve-tone system. The specificity of this solution may be better gauged against the diametrically opposed one of Stravinsky, who may be thought of as having worked out from the other, objective pole of the modern dilemma' (p. 31; Jameson's italics). For example, Schoenberg writes psychological studies (Die glückliche Hand, and Erwartung), while Stravinsky already starts with material for his music by writing in dance forms or in parody of historical music styles.

music fails on purely musical grounds because the strict inner logical structure of composing repels such topicality. Only the last works of Schoenberg bear witness to this fact by approaching the question of such musical content without pretending to achieve unity solely by musical means. Thus advanced music has no recourse but to admit its ossification without making concessions to the humanitarianism which it is inherently incapable of supporting musically; but the music thereupon loses its frank -- though vacuous -- organization, and humanitarianism loses its genuineness. This limitation (if not expulsion) of content by technique discloses a curious situation: the truth in such advanced music lies more in its refusal of humanitarian content and the vacuous aloofness of its logical structure than in any significance or import within itself in a positive sense. Adorno says that such music of our epoch is restricted to 'definitive negation': 'The work of art "reflects" society and is historical to the degree that it refuses the social, and represents the last refuge of individual subjectivity from the historical forces that threaten to crush it.'[4] There is a Charles Schultz "Peanuts" strip that has Snoopy in the (conscious) position of Schoenberg. Linus and Charlie Brown are passing Snoopy when Linus asks Charlie if he ever feels like running away, to which Charlie responds (in characteristic melancholia) that he sometimes feels like running away from everything. Snoopy then sagely reflects (with his head resting on a rock, as the symbol for the noble acceptance of super-personal necessity!): 'I remember having that feeling once when I was at the Daisy Hill Puppy Farm .... I climbed over the fence but I was still in the world.'

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[4] IBID., pp. 34-5, italics in text.

But what is the evolution of such a contradiction?: There is music today that both acknowledges and denies the epochal moment it marks. It is a consequence of the collapse of the traditional criteria for good or bad music. The collapse permits the dilettante to become famous in the eyes of a public that is no longer capable of distinguishing between personal and commercially induced and marketable consumption:

> 'For it is no less true that this drive toward total organization of the work which we find operative in the twelve-tone system is symptomatic of an objective tendency in the socio-economic structure of the modern world itself .... advertising, market research, psychological testing, and a host of other sophisticated techniques of mystification now complete a thorough planification of the public, and encourage the illusion of a life-style while disguising the disappearance of subjectivity and private life in the old sense. Meanwhile, what remains of the subjective, with its illusions of autonomy and its impoverished satisfactions, its ever diminishing images of happiness, is no longer able to distinguish between external suggestion and internal desire....'[5]

The rise of the middle and upper bourgeois class penetrated the circle of musical connoisseurs: anyone who could afford the price of a ticket could attend a performance. And it was socially advantageous to do so: one's sense of culture could be demonstrated to others, and aristocratic civility and taste could be aped. Compositions were commissioned; especially if the middle-class benefactor knew he would be 'amused' with the work. There was a rift developed between musical quality and the musical taste of the public. This is reflected today in the divergence of pieces in the programmes of record sets bearing the titles 'The Popular Beethoven' or 'Beethoven's Greatest Hits', as opposed to

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[5] IBID., pp. 35-6; italics in text.

'Beethoven's Best'.

The popular illusion is that Beethoven is comprehensible and Schoenberg is not. There is no need for this mysterious bifurcation promoted by what Adorno calls the culture industry.[6] Quality of a piece is still discernible by the same methods, even with regard to the limitations of modern composers' intentions that their works be judged explicitly according to these criteria. The key lies in the degree of generality displayed by the criteria; after all, composers rightly complain of the narrowness of criteria often used by their critics. In a sense not at all mysterious, in truth, the evaluation of modern music compositions is made easier since the advent of the style of composition that would have the composer conscious of the details of his process of creation.

This situation, however, is not without its awkwardness. It means, of course, that in a sense the critics -- the bourgeois consuming public -- forfeit their historically aristocratic claim to judgment, since by and large they are not interested in the rigors of the technical procedure that are currently generative of the final musical product. Hence the perpetuation of both the cliché criticism of incomprehensibility of new works, and the inability to distinguish good music from bad. Composers and enthusiastic amateurs are thus given -- by default, as it were -- the task of criticism.

And what do they criticize, but the music generated by a social epoch that is ignorant of its own persuasive power in the course of history. Why is the public alienated from 'dissonance'? Dissonance is a testimony of their own condition. Perhaps that is why. What the social mind admits to consciousness is less significant philosophically than what it does not. 'Dissonance' might be regarded as repulsive, incomprehensible, and unsettling precisely

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6 IBID., pp. 3-4.

because it mirrors the conditions grounding that very judgment. Indeed there is in our epoch a weakening of social relations, a transformation of them into mores and civil laws. They acquire ex cathedra status, and individuals that not only abide by them, but permit them to be created, gradually adopt the status of an undifferentiated collectivity. What formerly was a subject '.... no longer thinks, he "is thought", and his conscious experience, which used to correspond to the concept of reason in middle-class philosophy, becomes little more than a matter of registering symbols from zones outside itself ....'[7] It is evident in discussion below that comparable conditions exist in twelve-tone compositions wherein each note is at once absolutely individualized in its autonomous self-sufficiency and yet indistinguishable from any other note, insofar as the function of any note is to be the 'stuff' conforming to the principles of musical statement.

Furthermore, how are we to regard the claim of comprehension? What is magnificent in Bach, Mozart and Beethoven is just that which is furthest removed from a consumer oriented populace. When they say they understand, they mean only they salute a mould which is the cast of philosophic concepts: they lose the significance of the ideas as soon as the music is in their possession, for then it becomes something robbed of its own critical import. It becomes a thing, no longer efficacious as a goad towards novelty. The notes of the music as a coherent composition are apprehended only as a kind of atmosphere signifying a vague feeling: the music's sentimentality, its sweetness, or some such standardized response, constitutes the significance of music for a public drenched in canned 'muzak' at shopping malls, theatre lobbies, banks, and various other public buildings. This re-enforces the culture industry's advertising dichotomy of classical and popular music. The latter is generally distinguished from the former by the performer being a sign of the

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[7] IBID., p. 28, italics in text.

pleasure-response to be anticipated even before the performance is heard. It is the industry's creation of a singular response-type to a given performer that has perhaps influenced even the production of classical music expressly designed for 'general consumption' (and usually found in 'Easy Listening' sections of record stores): Beethoven is to be the epitome of virility, Tschaikovsky to be sweetly tuneful and played on violins with plenty of Schmaltz.

Verily, there is more effort required to listen to almost any piece by Beethoven than to a work by the supposedly incomprehensible Schoenberg.[8] And yet it takes no musician to whistle the themes of Beethoven's Fifth and Ninth Symphonies. But of course the contemporary public is convinced they are not to exert themselves in their leisure moments. To understand Bach or Beethoven the stylized concert hall atmosphere and the standardized public reaction thereto must be eradicated.

What, though, is cause to what?: the public cannot listen -- though they do hear something -- and the composers (like Stravinsky and Hindemith) write for deaf auditors. Music admits division into two parts: Kitsch and avant-garde. Since aesthetic significance is actually bound up with the latter, criticism, expression, and insight is today not a component of the official culture. It is, then, not a question of causality at all. It is a case of joint realization of congruent phenomena. Causality becomes a matter of parallelism.

The vulgar idea seems to be that the diatonic scale is an undeniable product of natural law. This is not so: it was formulated by an Italian monk in the late sixteenth century. It owes its steadfastness to the tremendous generality of its powers for expression. Regardless of this fact, it is still irrational that Tschai-

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8 Adorno. Philosophy of Music, p. 10.

kovsky, for example, as he is known in America, is regarded as emotionally superior to some of the works of Schoenberg (like the Violin Concerto, or Erwartung). But then the public is in the habit of confusing the feelings for which a work stands with the feelings a work evokes.

The unreflective auditor who would request the modern composer think less about what he is doing only utters a hyper-romantic plea for the ascendency of naivety. It betrays a bedevilled conscience seeking to avoid its own self-disclosure. Why else the repulsion of the avant-garde and the embracing of the tranquilizing status-quo retaining lullaby of the dilettantes?

The culture industry appropriates the vehicle for enlightenment and disfigures it according to its economic principles of mystification, thus benefitting prevailing obscurantism. Where is the alternative to this? Modern philosophy cannot provide it[9] as long as it continues trying to fit the square pegs of logical deductive systems in the round holes of life (or into whatever they are meant to fit). Government bodies will not provide it of their own accord: increasing bureaucratic entanglements eviscerate that sense of personal participation in adventures of culture that is necessary for the artistic progress of an era. Technology, too, which could alleviate all human pain caused by insufficiency of food, shelter, and clothing, is otherwise occupied with more lucrative affairs. It remains, then, for Art to oppose the fake clarity promulgated by the currently reigning obligarchy. It can do so by giving a "Faustian" reflection of the

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9 IBID., p. 24. 'So also in the realm of philosophy the bristling jargon of seemingly private languages is to be evaluated against the advertising copybook recommendations of "clarity" as the essence of "good writing": whereas the latter seeks to hurry the reader past his own received ideas, difficulty is inscribed in the former as the sign of the effort which must be made to think real thoughts.'

epoch. It can take on essentiality insofar as it negates actuality.

Atonal compositions are not to be regarded, however, as solipsistic. There is no desire in the works of Schoenberg to sink completely into the logical scheme of twelve-tone technique: there is an undeniable need for music to have auditors. It is in a sense unfortunate that they may be had today only by admitting a concession in twelve-tone technique, for its rejection by society at large is the only mark of its real significance: in the late works of Schoenberg tonal progressions are admitted. The works finally submit to the public. A hint at something recognizable is heard through the concrete presentation of the notes of Schoenberg's works, like an aural-optical illusion of a blurred superimposed image: '.... the distorted result of an attempt to imagine wholeness in a period that has no experience of it, under circumstances that doom the attempt to failure from the very start.'[10]

The influence of the public is especially evident in the Piano Concerto, Op. 42 (1942). The strictures of twelve-tone technique are here greatly relaxed, or, more accurately, virtually waived. In the Concerto there are tonal effects: C major in the outer movements, and F sharp major at the beginning of the finale, supported by a pedal on F sharp sustained by both piano and orchestra. Also the treatment of the row is relaxed: contrary to former practice, Schoenberg allows part of the row to repeat itself before making its complete statement. This work is to be played without breaks, but its marked changes of mood indicate its four-movement structure in a not subtle manner. 'Comprehension' by the public is assisted by the homely programme notes Schoenberg provides for each of the sections: the first part (Andante) 'Life was so easy'; the second (Molto allegro) 'But suddenly hatred broke out'; the third (Adagio)

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10 IBID., p. 38.

'a serious situation was created'; and fourth (Rondo giocoso) 'but life goes on'.[11]

The music becomes another thing for the public to hear. Its commercialization by culturally obliged corporations alienates the artist from the beneficiary, degrades the music to a fetishism of the elements of musical expression, and fosters the atrophy of composition itself.

So much by way of introduction. The explanation of the genesis of this situation constitutes a discussion of the categories for musical evaluation.

2. ASCENDENCY OF THE DEVELOPMENT - FREEDOM AND RESPECT

The function of classical sonata form was an expressive one, one that assigned a significant syntax for communicating a kind of experience. But it is also true that experiences have given themselves over to communication in that form, so that the form, as a convention, could carry conventionalized experiences. It remains the case, though, that its import was an organizational one for expression.

The form is deprived of its communicational possibilities today by a rule which has it that a musical work of art is to develop wholly from within itself. This rule was present in classical sonata form, but without the autonomy donated it by contemporary music, theoreticians and composers such as those of Schoenberg's school. The classical version of the modern rule took the shape of the development section in sonata form. The eighteenth century -- before Beethoven -- regarded the development, in the then emerging sonata form as such, as a lowly section because it was considered to be merely in the form of variation, and this meant only masking the themes. In Beethoven, though, the development becomes central to the form. He gives it dynamics and spontaneity, charges it with the

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[11] Reich. Schoenberg. p. 213.

utterances of a sensitive individuality. But here the development justifies the whole sonata form: it presupposes the stated -- objective -- existence of its themes, and presents their destiny within the work as a whole.

This fidelity to a given theme placed the sonata -- placed music -- in a specific relation to time. Namely, music was not indifferent to time because it did not depend for its significance on mere repetition, but on development -- organically unfolding -- alteration. At the same time, too, music was not overpowered (annihilated) by time because the alterations were of an original melodic entity: there was permanence amid change,[12] like enduring personhood in the company of the things which alter in its life.

There is an observation of the utmost importance here. It is that this relationship to time also prescribes the limitation to sonata-development: it can have significance only if it is not absolute, that is, only if it is not subject for (i.e., not the topic of) the totality of the musical form itself. The best examples come from Beethoven: the terse developments are in the tautest movements of sonata form -- for example, the first movements of the Third and Fifth Symphonies -- where it is to be noted that the significance and coherence of a development section only makes sense if it is part of a totality. Thus the morphological analysis of an objective form for expressiveness discloses the dependence of the factors upon the genetic unity of the final fact. Classicism may then be defined as the liberation of the development from the role of a superficial embellishment upon the merely given to that of the agency whereby what is given can realize existentially the import of its possibilities. Thus subjectivity and the personal inform the score down to its smalllest elements, but do so only by working through the objective, suffusing and vivifying it, rather than by blotting it out and

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12 Jameson, pp. 16-17.

smothering it with the overwhelming harmonic and colouristic bias of later music.'[13] -- or for that matter with dictatorship of the twelve-tone technique.

Classicism avoids these characteristics by being cognizant of the respect owed the exposition and the reprise: subjectivity gains its rightful freedom when it knows its own parameters. And then it becomes more than merely itself: it is a nodal juncture for the actualization of diverse potentialities conditioning the various situations, and their expressions, of the world. The development section concretises the possibilities that were but immanent in that which is settled, namely the exposition; while in turn it objectifies itself as a factor both delimiting and taken account of by the creative advance beyond itself, namely the reprise which resolves and succeeds it.

3. DEVELOPMENT AS THE TOTALITY - BEYOND FREEDOM AND RESPECT

Schoenberg extrapolates to the logical conclusion a tendency attributed to Beethoven, namely to give to the development not only a central role in a composition, but to make a composition of it. Thus the implicit topic of his music is the isolated, autonomous, and alienated subject that was once found in a different form in the late classical-romantic phase.

In this connection, Rufer presents[14] at the end of his third chapter (entitled "The Antecedents of Twelve-Note Composition in the Compositional Technique of Classical and Pre-Classical (Polyphonic) Music") an 'analysis and synthesis' of the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata, Op. 10 No. 1, in C minor. Rufer comments: 'This will show us that even in the music of the youthful Beethoven -- who was composing in a relatively "unconscious" manner at that time -- the creation of the themes of a work follows an idea of construction which is also of fundamental importance for Schoenberg's music in

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13 IBID., pp. 40-1.

14 J. Rufer. Composition with Twelve Notes, p. 38.

general, and for twelve-note music in particular; it is the idea that, in order to ensure the thematic unification of a work and thus the unity of its musical content, all the musical events in it are developed, directly or indirectly, out of one basic shape.' After leading his readers through an 'analysis and synthesis' of 162 bars of the score, all the while taking pains to demonstrate that each figure presented is derived or other wise related to a previously occuring figure, Rufer concludes the chapter with this finely wrought paragraph: 'Just as the thematic material of a tonal work is derived from the basic shape, similarly in twelve-note music it arises out of the basic set (series).'[15] This, however, is as little surprizing as it is interesting. What is interesting (though not really surprizing) is that Rufer is completely deaf to the distinction between mere logical derivation ('direct or indirect') and the process whereby heterogeneous elements are entwined in such a fashion that enhances their individual identity while bringing them near each other dynamically in the context of a whole which transcends them. The compositions of twelve-tone technique are comparable to Beethoven sonatas only in the sense in which the preludes and fugues of Bach are comparable to Mozart's sonatas: namely, in the former the voices are presented in the similarity of a tonal idiom and the course of the fugue elaborates their different intrinsic natures over a series of rich modulations, while the latter presents its subjects in different tonal idioms and the development of the sonata unites them in terms of their dynamic similarities.[16] (Of course in Bach the so-called derivations are not strictly logical, as they are in twelve-tone compositions.) Thus twelve-tone composition is more pre-Beethovenean than anything else. (In passing, notice Rufer's version of the

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15 IBID., p. 45.

16 Cf. H.C. Colles. The Growth of Music, Part II, p. 3. Colles is not responsible for the analogy suggested here between Bach and modern compositional methods.

modern notion that there is a 'knowledge explosion', expressed by that positivistic attitude appropriate to the Aristotelean pronouncement that "Now we know for sure": Rufer is intent to point out that what was unconscious to the pagan composers is now made conscious in composition by virtue of twelve-tone theory having been made flesh.)

Now in Beethoven (and especially in Brahms) the unity of thematic development is achieved for the large part by striking a happy balance between the dynamics and differentiations among the principle themes (taking place mainly in the development) and traditional -- that is, tonal -- language. But if, like Schoenberg, one is to adopt a strictly subjective[17] approach to writing, then there is no requirement for a traditional language. Thus Wagner, validly inferring from his rules for musical production, replaced thematic unity in the art song with the 'leitmotiv' plus programmatic content. This has the advantage (or disadvantage) of making works easier to understand while also creating another authoritative public figure: 'As in parliamentary demagoguery, the listening masses submit to the conductor with a kind of hypnotized fascination. The quality of their listening deteriorates;.... Thus they are increasingly unable to follow anything as thoroughly organized as a Beethoven sonata, and instead of the theme and variations with its development and resolution

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17 That is, the music conforms to rules chosen by the preference or ingenuity of the composer. (For example, Schoenberg did not pursue the ideas of Scriabin.) In Schoenberg's case, the music conforms not to an aesthetic rule of expression, but to a technical rule of method; and thus it is that in his system notes have a functional, not an expressive, role. Of course this is at odds not only with the essence of music itself, but ultimately even with Schoenberg's originally subjective starting point.

in time, Wagner offers them something cruder and easier to grasp: the repetition of easily recognizable themes not unlike advertising slogans, "fatefully" underlined for the listener's benefit by the dictatorial gesture of the conductor.'[18]

If the unity attained in a work by thematic-tonal balance can be called realistic (since whatever can be existent in a work at any moment depends upon and presupposes a real totality wherein it finds its own significance and coherence), then the kind of unity attainable by the Schoenberg-Wagner thesis can be called nominalistic[19] (since the moments of these works presuppose nothing and require nothing but themselves in order to exist). The theory and works of Schoenberg are the demonstration that the more Wagner's nominalism is taken seriously the more is musical language to be mastered not by aesthetics, but by the abstractness of rationality applied to the material of this language itself. It is apparent even at this point, by way of example, that with the disappearance of tonality, the homophonic triad or chord of (vertical) harmony is replaced merely by conincidence of sounds to generate chords in (horizontal) polyphony.

One corollary of the axiom of nominalism is that the distinction between the essential and the accidental disappears: each tone in a composition can be regarded as no further from a central point in the work than any other, according to Rufer[20]; and this for the reason that there is no privileged position or tonal

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18 Jameson, p. 16

19 IBID., p. 25.

20 Composition with Twelve Notes. p. 51.

centre in the work to be seen as nodal. Every tone has its place in the work due solely to the position it occupies in its 'theme' or row. Hence transitions, modulations, themes, bridges are foreign to nominalistic categories of composition.

Notice also the irony that the development disappears. Each tone (or coincident set of tones) proclaims its autonomy, and so the moments of the work are set along side each other disjunctively: there is no experienceable dynamical development wherein musical events are grouped, allowed to grow organically, and gain meaning in a context beyond themselves. So once again music has mastered time; but instead of supplying a perfection of form, nominalism masters time by negating it.[21] It accomplishes this by allowing an overarching constructivist principle to inhibit the development of all musical moments. Modern atonal music denies temporal experience.

4. TWELVE-TONE TECHNIQUE

In its relation to time -- that is, in its denial of time -- music changes from its former dynamics to statics. For the Schoenberg school it is the fundamental structure for dynamics -- namely, variation -- which becomes absolute. But under this rule for musical production, variation too then frees itself from any obligations to the organically dynamic pattern it had formerly: 'themes' do not present themselves as involved with their own development or working-out. The point is that everything in a sense is variation; while in another sense nothing at all varies. The variation procedure is applied to the ('thematic') material prior to actual composition, so that the final issue of the music is the result of a procedure to which the materials of music have been subject: 'This double function, of being responsible for the ordering of the musical

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21 Jameson, p. 25.

material and of forming the thematic material in advance, gives the twelve-note series, working in conjunction with the traditional means of composition, a pivotal importance.'[22] And the final music product does not betray the procedures in themselves to which it bowed. Thus the development as such is imperceptible: the music is static.

Schoenberg insists that twelve-tone technique not be regarded as a 'method of composition'. It could more accurately be compared to the arrangement of colours on a palette than to the actual painting of the picture, as Adorno notes. The composing begins only when the ordering of the twelve tones is settled. Rufer deals quickly with this idea in these sentences: 'For no one has yet claimed that the use of a major or minor key is a guarantee of good music. Neither does composition according to Schoenberg's method give any such guarantee, nor is it a magic formula by which one can "calculate" music. For the idea and its realization are, here as there, the indispensable prerequisites of artistic composition.'[23] Schoenberg himself was quite explicit in this regard. He wrote:

> 'I can't utter too many warnings against over-rating these analyses (of the rows used in his works), since after all they only lead to what I have always been dead against: seeing how it is done; whereas I have always helped people to see: what it is! I have repeatedly tried to make Wiesenbrund understand this, and also Berg and Webern. But they won't believe me. I can't say it often enough: my works are twelve-note compositions, not twelve-note compositions: in this respect people go on confusing me with Haver, to whom composition is only of secondary importance.'[24]

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22 Rufer, p. 81.

23 IBID., p. 5.

24 Stein, Schoenberg Letters, pp. 164-5. A letter of July 27, 1932, to former pupil and then brother-in-law Rudolf Kolisch. Italics in text.

And the task of composing is made no easier by the introduction of the tone series. In fact quite the contrary: it becomes more difficult.[25] In a composition class, Schoenberg pointed to the eraser on one end of his pencil and said to John Cage, "This end is more important than the other." 'After twenty years.' recalls Cage[26], 'I learned to write directly in ink.'

Twelve-tone technique requires that every work be derived from a row, whether it be a single phrase or a work in several movements. Schoenberg writes: 'The method of composing with twelve notes grew out of the necessity ... of creating a new procedure in musical construction which seemed fit to replace those formal and structural differences provided formerly by tonal harmonies. This method consists primarily in the constant and exclusive use of a set of twelve different tones.'[27] A row is an arbitrarily designated ordering of the twelve tones available to a writer in the tempered half-tone system. Further, every tone must be determined by this selected row: there are no "free" notes.

Consistently with the axioms of absolute position for each note, the composer can manoeuver the row in four ways.[28] First, by stating the row. Second, by inversion of the row; that is, by substituting for each interval of the row the same interval in the reverse direction. Third, by a crab of the row; that is, beginning with the final tone and ending with the first. Fourth, by inversion of crab. These four derivate rows may then be allowed to commence at

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25 Reich, Schoenberg, p. 133.

26 John Cage. Silence (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), p. 270.

27 "Compositions with Twelve Tones" in Schoenberg's Style and Idea. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950) And quoted in Rufer, p. 81.

each of the twelve tones of the chromatic scale, so that a row yields forty-eight different shapes. Also, 'derivations' can be obtained from a row by symmetrical arrangements of some of the tones. The row can be divided into symmetrical portions. More than one row may serve as a point of departure for a composition. Depending on the complexity intended, the row is treated harmonically or contrapuntally. In the former the row is parcelled out to the various vertical and horizontal structures, runs its course, and then is either repeated or replaced by one of its derivates. In the latter there is simultaneous employment of the row and its derivates.

Of course if the general task is to avoid tonality, it behooves the composer not to repeat a tone until the other eleven are sounded. Also, he ought not double voices at the octave.

5. MONORITHMICA

Using twelve tones seems arbitrary: why not fewer? The answer to this illustrates how advanced music has freed music only by enchaining it to a universal procedure of pre-compositional technique. Consistency -- logic, intellect -- requires sequential presentation of twelve tones because any fewer might give the aural impression of something permanent, that is, it might be construed tonally and a maxim of twelve-tone technique would thereby be violated, namely that no tone has any privileged status in a composition as leading note or tonic or whatever. For the same reason octaves are prohibited.

A melody in atonal works owes its existence to the universal hypostatization of the rule requiring the employment of a dozen sounds in a pre-established order. But there is a problem. As the row approaches the conclusion of its statement, there is increasingly less choice as to what tone shall succeed its predecessor. Finally,

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28 Rufer, p. 82. Also see Colles Growth of Music, Part III, pp. 201-202; and Mosco Carner, "Alban Berg (1885-1935)" in The Concerto, Ed. Ralph Hill (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1952), pp. 366-7.

after the designation of the eleventh tone, the next and last one is inevitable. No choice. There is a compelling force evident here; a force produced not only by the writer's rules, but also by the listening ear. Generally, when we listen to atonal works -- as when we listen to tonal ones or to people speaking or to the sounds of birds and children outside our windows -- we are making sense of things, interpreting. And we do this by listening for something, namely for the familiar. The familiar proclaims itself in the guise of the recurrent, recurrent either in detail or in a type or a form for examples of some kind. Thus the general case is this: 'At the level of human experience we do find fatigue arising from the mere repetition of cycels. The device by which this fatigue is again obviated takes the form of the preservation of the fundamental abstract structure of the cycle, combined with the variation of the concrete details of succeeding cycles. This device is particularly illustrated in music and in vision. It is of course capable of an enormous elaboration of complexity of detail. Thus the rhythm of life is not merely to be sought in simple cyclical recurrence.'[29] Listening to a twelve-tone work, the ear marks the row, and we tend to hear a sort of rondo. This is as droll -- in a sense -- as it is exhausting. The 'melody' (or thematic row) is too dense, too complete. And the suggestion of termination, when once the twelfth tone is detected, is overpowering. Yet the composition does not terminate. Obviously this problem cannot be overcome by the nature of the intervals themselves:

> 'The difference [between a twelve-note composer and a tonal composer], an apparently crippling one to start with, thus is that the twelve-note composer is not, like the diatonic or modal composer, free to choose, repeat or omit any notes of his scale and to continue with different formation as he likes (not to mention that he can modulate, since he deals with keys). He

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29 A.N. Whitehead. Function of Reason (Boston: Beacon Press, 1929), p. 22.

> is further handicapped, or aided, if he takes that view of the matter, by the fact that none of his notes takes precedence in a hierarchy of tonic, dominant, subdominant, and so on, but all have the same importance, so that if he requires tensions and relaxations, he cannot attain them on a tonal basis.'[30]

To some extent, a clever use of rhythm can overcome the terminal energy of the last tone: 'In order to be able to recognize the repetition of the particular thematic shape or melody, in spite of such considerable melodic variation as is effected, in particular, by the use of the retrograde [crab] and retrograde inversion, we find that in these cases the isorhythmic [monorhythmic] principle is used, i.e., the rhythm of the thematic shape is repeated exactly in all essentials, and also its phrasing.'[31]

In one of his numerous writings Schoenberg said that the problem with traditional theories of composition is that they indicate methods for producing only beginnings and endings, but never treat the logic of continuation. The same criticism can justly be applied to twelve tone rows. Each recurrence of the row, each sounding of the twelfth note designates, from the viewpoint of continuation, a moment of utter arbitrariness.

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30 Colles. Growth of Music, Part III, p. 201. Note, first, that it is technically inaccurate to say that the twelve tone composer can modulate: the original row can be raised or lowered by any constant interval under the condition that the tones of the series retain the same intervalic relationship among themselves. This is not transposition as such, for although the row may have a vague sort of key-feeling about it, it is not conceived by the composer in any key. (The vague sensing that it is, probably is suggested to the listener by his mentally accenting the last few notes of the series and associating this with the diatonic mode of listening.) Second, it is sheer understatement to phrase the matter thus: 'if he requires tensions and relaxations'. Music without these would be as repetitive and boring as the hum of a machine.

31 Rufer, p. 117; italics in text.

Rufer disagrees: 'This does not in the least affect the fundamental continuity of the process of composition .... Being composed of motifs, it [a twelve-tone composition] perforce acquires a motivic character. "Motivic" means frequent, organic repetition; one recognizes a motif by its repetitions. It is an essential prerequisite for the coherence of the content of a musical form, and this explains why the series, which carries the motivic content of a work, must be repeated. It is only a further step to its continuous and uninterrupted repetition ....'[32] But listen to Schoenberg's Fourth Quartet (Op. 37) for strings; listen to the main theme and through its inversion, then to the crab, and notice the angular re-entrance of the theme following this. There is a conclusion to draw from the experience: namely, that there is nothing at all in the row that impels it onward, establishing its continuity with its derivates. It gains its transformations and repetitive length by the compulsion of an organizational code that is external to the music itself: it is forced to continue.

There is a greater problem, though. It is that mechanical manipulation of rhythm ultimately overpowers the attempt at melodic treatment of the row. Now the best characterization of the quality of harmonic music is its success in transforming mere spatial relations (of intervals) into time.

> 'Harmony introduces into music a temporal element. Just as space can only be described in terms of time (a succession of steps), so time can only be described in terms of space (a space of time imagined as existing simultaneously, like a panorama). Time is the emergence of qualities. Hence two qualities sounding simultaneously describe time in terms of space. Just as the evolutionary

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32 IBID., p. 137.

> sciences import from external reality a perspective of a whole field of qualities evolving ...., so harmony brings into music a whole rich field of temporal enrichment and complexity. It individualises music, and continually creates new qualities.'[33]

The point to notice about temporal relations among entities generally, is that the relations pre-suppose differentiations concerning the entities involved. But the denial of this constitutes a fundamental principle of twelve-tone technique: that the discarding of a tonal framework entails the axiom that no tone or interval receives any more special or differentiated emphasis than any other note or interval. Thus since harmonized melody depends on temporal relation, and this in turn on differentiation of related entities, the Wagner-Schoenberg theory, by constructing a thesis of music founded on the relation of identity among its entities, rejects melody as such.

Consequently, in the face of this problem, -- and it is a problem because listening is grounded in temporality, the recognition of the familiar type presupposes differently qualified particular occurences -- melody is given over to recurring rhythmic configurations which take on the role of themes. The themes recur relentlessly regardless of the context of the row, and heeding only the obstinate logic of the compositional technique.

In this scheme of things it is evident that melodic modification as such gives no indication of meaning or significant content. As a result, the melodic factor vanishes even in rhythm: the intervals and time radically diverge. Alban Berg employed this device in his great opera Wozzeck, and called the technique monoritmica. No longer is there the promise, the fulfillment, and the afterword;

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[33] Caudwell, p. 269.

instead, the intervals of the row are swallowed raw and used as building blocks for sound configurations that reject their inherent possibilities.

We owe our gratitude partly to the atonal school for its emancipation (as Schoenberg called it) of such 'dissonant' intervals as the major seventh and minor ninth. It is no longer so difficult to listen to such intervals with understanding. It is, however, supremely unfortunate that the price paid to this school for these equal rights is also what is forfeited for the retention of the conventionalized intervals.

What once attained its meaning in virtue of its differentiated role and place in the scheme of a work is levelled to a crude collective. Expression not in the field of tonality is mortally threatened because any experience with which it deals cannot be conceptualized in the face of the disappearance of qualitative, distinctive relationships among intervals, sounds and formal development. For example, the joy and exuberance of tasting life to the full among other living beings proclaims its mirth in the crystal key of E major in Carl Nielsen's 'Inextinguishable' Symphony. And the proclamation comes as a discovery after embarking upon adventures in feelings given through several other tonal processes: namely D minor, F major, and G sharp minor. Expression here is convincing, human, and subtle, and is due precisely to the expertise of presenting the right atmosphere of feelings suggested by a key, and then executing a convincing modulation. 'Both Beethoven and Nielsen are pre-occupied with the experience of "becoming"; Nielsen's themes change their identity through conflict just as Beethoven's do, and the victory his symphonies achieve is a triumph of humanism won, not in the interests of the self, but of civilization.'[34] A less complex example of expression requiring tonality and form is the music of Mozart: he regarded form as having a normative scheme of modulation

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34 Wilfred Mellors. Man and His Music, Volume IV. And quoted in The Symphony, Volume II, ed. Robert Simpson (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 55.

at its disposal, and thus was able to deliver the most minute shadings of feeling-tone often by the ingenious placing of but one note.

Now in order to articulate larger forms than a rondo for solo piano, twelve-tone music proceeds to crude means, namely drastic contrasts of timbre, register, and volume.

> 'Such relatively traditional matters as instrumentation are, for example, now codified, so that in the notion of Klangfarbenmelodie a given succession of instrumental timbres (such as the sequence violin, trumpet, piano) takes on the functional value of a sequence of notes in a melody. There is carried to completion in the musical realm that basic tendency of all modern art in general toward a kind of absolute overdetermination of all its elements, toward an abolition of chance, a kind of total absorption of the last remnants of sheer contingency in the raw material, which are henceforth painfully assimilated into the structure of the work itself.'[35]

Also, in order that the principle of monoritmica perform the service of identifying clearly the thematic shape of the motive in a twelve-tone composition, it is essential that 'the rhythm should be very characteristic and marked.'[36] Hence the often noticed jerky abruptness of much modern music. And the so-called themes employed must be striking as well, they must present striking contrasts of high and low and loud and soft, else the claim of the layman that advanced music is boring will be just.

Does this manipulation of the material really extricate the twelve-tone composer from the problems he faces? The odd thing about treating differentiation as synonymous with contrast is that the former distinguishes itself as being significant to the extent that it is present as an alternative to that which was previously established --

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35 Jameson, p. 30.

36 Rufer, p. 117.

explicitly or not; while the latter, placing one effect after another in an extended linear fashion, soon tends to blur the distinction between the things contrasted. This is a consequence of the autonomy of each moment in a nominalistic work: there ultimately can be even no contrast if no moment must refer to any other in order to exist.

It is one of the greatest accomplishments of Beethoven that mere contrasts were avoided and genuine multiplicity of thematic mood was obtained by subtle transitions, and this often by a modulation. If a composer refuses the life-jacket of tonality in the ocean of musical expressive power, then in time of need -- when the call to community wells up within him -- he resorts to an act of violence on the musical material itself.

Melodic detail no longer has any persuasive power over a work as a whole; it is relegated to the mere consequence of a systematized constructional technique. How like the present social situation of individuality. The classic tension between tonality and inspiration -- the need for the communal setting as a confirmation of personal insight -- was resolved by Beethoven into a becomingness, not unlike its counterpart of Plato's view of the world as a beautiful and moving replica of the immutable. Schoenberg, like Aristotle in his logical moods, proclaims the process of becomingness to have terminated. Forthwith for the world follows the expulsion of beauty.

6. HARMONY

In triadic harmony the difference between some notes in a chord disappears in a tension-free consonance. Dissonance might be called that formation of a chord whereby there is clarity and differentiation of the tones constituting a chord. According to the rules of harmonic construction in twelve-tone technique, the sounding of any tone requires the sounding of the remaining tones in the row from

which the given tone was selected.[37] Now the sounding of the remaining tones may be presented simultaneously or successively; but in all cases each moment attracts complex forces directly to itself in virtue of its pre-established position in the organization of the row. Each sound, though, still retains its essential autonomy from any reference to some melodically-treated line or harmonic progression; or as Rufer says, the 'chord-like sounds have no obligation' in the sense of a harmonic function.[38] Thus the passage of one harmonic chord complex to a successor creates an effect of great depth, supposedly due to the revealed radiant-type force perceivable with each chord itself.

The harmonic principle, however, does not manifest itself so explicitly in the actual compositions. Although it is the case that in principle each chord-complex radiates great individual power -- and can do so without obligation to whatever differences there might be among its components -- the further requirement that the horizontal debts of the row be fulfilled presents the problem of how to treat the leading voice. This puts the horizontal and the vertical -- the contrapuntal successiveness and harmonic simultaneity -- at odds that in a practical sense destroys the efficacy of the harmonic principle. Rufer admits that 'composition with twelve notes is primarily and predominantly of a contrapuntal nature....'[39] Likewise, harmonic requirements precipitate contrapuntal difficulties. The chords of twelve-tone polyphony hardly ever stand in that radiant glow among themselves that is theirs in theory: even when the row converges on itself in simultaneous sound, rule requires that each tone assert itself as filling its role in two directions.[40]

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37 IBID., p. 61.

38 IBID., p. 127.

39 loc. cit.

40 IBID., p. 48.

The layman's observation that the chord in twelve-tone polyphony appears as an accidental by-product of a pre-occupation with polyphonic construction is not entirely destitute of significance, even if it is inaccurate concerning the composer's labours. To a large extent, it seems this is how the harmonies are created -- as a result of treating the leading voice. To the same extent, whatever harmony finally shows, has as little musical meaning. Why? The inherent possibilities of a sound are suppressed: the tones are numbered in the first place, and the ubiquity of the row technique makes the sound atrophous, sterile, and immobile. Harmony could bind the chords together in a profound complementariness, but the presence of the row alienates each of them all the more precisely when harmonic progressions are attempted in the construction of works. This marks the end of the musical experience of time. It is a mortal flaw, for it means dynamics are at a standstill, repressed, without release.

The existence of this unhappy situation suggests that the source of the problem is the error of removing the role of the leading note in twelve-tone theory. This explains, first, the loss of relationship among the components of a harmonic progression; second, the rigidity of succeeding moments, and the consequent resorting to extra-melodic-harmonic means in the attempt to secure differentiation; and, third, musical meaninglessness due principally to a failure to achieve continuity.

This last point must not be confused with the layman's that the music is meaningless because he does not understand it. On the contrary, the subsumption of it by the understanding discloses its insignificance as musical expression. The motion persuaded by the leading note is replaced by intellectualized construction: transition replaced by the mediation of technique. The severing of sounds from one another is too high a price to pay for the formalization of a methodology of composition. The employment of sounds to

express the experience of becomingness is replaced by their deployment, indicative of their individual alienation and stagnation. 'Thus the system of Schoenberg, the product of an inhumanly systematized society, becomes itself a kind of straitjacket, a constraint rather than a liberating convention.'[41] In the absence of a monadic quality encouraging brotherhood among tones is a wizard-like calculation enforcing its lonely asceticism by dominating each of them. They are sacrificed to a totality that is never as such expressed, for the totality is indeed the set of principles dictating rules of manipulation of the musical material.

Yet there is a kind of restorative feature about this music. Dissonance likely arose as an expression of tension, pain and contradiction. But after Wagner, it took the form of musical material; that is, it joined the ranks of familiar and possible sounds while vacating its former position as expressive of essentially individual situations.[42] Now dissonance was obviously adopted by the twelve-tone theorists who refused to base pieces on tonal centres. The dissonances, just because they have become crystallized, now proclaim the mastery over the feelings they once bore. Adorno remarks that they become at once vehicles for social protest, and envoys for an implied consonance.

But it was just this fundamental experiencable possibility that Schoenberg denied when during the composition of Pierrot Lunaire he said he wrote according to strict counterpoint, and that consonance -- though marring the features of atonality -- could only be permitted on unaccented beats: he would restrict dissonance to mere dissonance as such. How the sounds ached for release from 'free'

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41 Jameson, p. 37.

42 IBID., p. 21.

composition! Dissonance became an end in itself. 'All energy is now invested in dissonance; by comparison the individual resolutions become ever thinner, mere optional decor or restorative asseveration. Tension becomes the fundamental organizing principle to the degree that the negation of the negation, the utter canceling out of the debt of each dissonance, is as in some gigantic credit system indefinitely postponed.'[43] At this period of his work, dissonance was treated as a quantity devoid of quality and so suitable for any function the scheme of construction required. It became raw material, and marked a regression of music to the primitivity of mere physical nature. The tones became weighted, and like Newton's particles, remained at rest in the absence of an external force. And this was to be expected under Schoenberg's nominalistic thesis, for he had been moving towards the theory that would view tones as only material, and he himself would consciously supply the extra-musical force designed to make them behave in his designated fashion. It is not surprizing, then, to see Schoenberg take the next step in his later works: his former bête noire, consonance, was more liberally admitted in his compositions. And why not?: the tones were shocked into alienation anyway by a relentless logic, so that in his Third Quartet consonance and dissonance stand along side each other[44] in complete disinterestedness, mutual unconcern, and utter insignificance like dwellers in a high-rise apartment building.

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43 T.W. Adorno. Versuch Über Wagner, quoted in Jameson, p. 22.

44 Reich. Schoenberg, p. 161. It was this work that prompted Schoenberg's later warning about analyses of music to his brother-in-law, Rudolf Kolisch. Cf. note 24.

The pervasiveness of the technique has even obliterated the legitimacy of employing aesthetic considerations in the task of composing. Schoenberg has said: 'Aesthetic questions are unknown to me. But as regards so-called composition with twelve tones, this is a method more of a craftsmanly nature, which exerts no devisive influence on either the work's structure or its character. The question is simply, 'how is the material to be treated ' -- in the sense of a particular way in which one exploits its conditions so as to give it form.'[45]

Even more than in the late works of Schoenberg, or those of Anton Webern, the later compositions of Alban Berg employ the technique of using consonance and dissonance together. Some critics have interpreted this 'concession' to tonality as bringing the intellectual academicism of Schoenberg to a humane level, thereby making atonality more 'accessible'.[47] Jean Sibelius, however, was likely more perceptive when he quipped, 'Berg is Schoenberg's best work.'[48]

7. COUNTERPOINT

Counterpoint is the mainstay of twelve-tone music. The material at the disposal of the twelve-tone composer, namely rows, is best treated by the logic of counterpoint which even traditionally

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45 Schoenberg's partial answer to questions posed by the German psychologist Julius Bahle, and reprinted in Reich, Schoenberg, pp. 236-242. Schoenberg must be exaggerating: Rufer, and Schoenberg himself on other occasions, has admitted that the row technique does influence structure in one sense, namely the works are polyphonic in essence.

46 Mosco Carner in The Concerto, ed. R. Hill, p. 368.

47 Santeri Levas. Sibelius: A Personal Portrait. (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1972), p. 74. Thus Sibelius thought Berg the leading exponent of the Schoenberg school. But Levas relates that Sibelius' more seasoned judgment was that Berg's significance as a composer would be a transient one.

has had the reputation for the ability to free a leading voice from the sluggishness to which harmony easily falls prey. And counterpoint is also significant in the cohesion of form in music: witness the profound musical expressiveness of Bach's Art of Fugue and Beethoven's late works. The lesson from these compositions seems to be that homophony is not adequate (though it is necessary) for the cohesion of works of such depth.

Bach's answer to the question, how is polyphony possible as harmonic polyphony?, is: tonality. Schoenberg does not accept this answer. Theoretically, Schoenberg forbade doubling at the octave. Practically, however, he admitted this was too strict. He wanted octaves re-admitted for dynamic purposes: to emphasize a part more distinctly.[48] Schoenberg, though, is not correct in this view; witness the orchestration of Robert Schumann. Schumann thought that doubling would produce a stronger forte. The ear, though, conceives it as quite the opposite. One only has to listen to the symphonic works of Sibelius who knew better than to double instruments to achieve a stong, sonorous, and smooth volume.

Crab and inverted canons are the schemes designed to overcome the formal elements of harmony. But the importance of these devices are certainly diminished when the harmonic factor is already dismissed by the technique involved; that is, when the formation of a correct chord is no longer any test for successful contrapuntal design. Twelve-tone technique thus literally follows the maxim of counterpoint to place 'note against note'. Such placement is derived directly from the nature of the row, while traditional contrapuntists had to derive a leading voice from the requirements for horizontal progression. But the relaxing of harmonic requirements would entail the dismissal of those devices designed to amalgamate the disparateness of the voices and affirm a communion among parts; namely devices such as mirroring and imitating parts and canonic repetition. (Rufer,

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[48] Stein. Schoenberg Letters, pp. 247-8.

however, includes these in his treatise.)

But the employment of these techniques by Schoenberg and Webern creates an effect of redundancy or tautology, since the rows treated in a strictly contrapuntal and non-traditional manner would establish their own sort of coadunation anyway. Using these effects to establish coherence among voices presumes a tonal progression that is out of place in twelve-tone technique; for the imitation of voices assumes a reflection of the pivotal notes functioning as leading note, dominant, and so on. The autonomy of each note in twelve-tone technique does not furnish such a rationale for the use of canonic imitation: the traditional polyphony used imitation on the basis of the relationship among notes. The steps and cadences of traditional polyphony pre-suppose and display a dynamism and continuity whose means of expression, when employed in atonal works, leads to immobility.[49]

The use of these techniques contradicts the basic tenets of twelve-tone theory. The row is not a substitute for a key: it lacks the pervasive generality of significant meaningfulness. And so the intervals of the row gain no new effectiveness when "transposed" and "imitated". The final judgment is that twelve-tone theory cannot itself provide what is required of it musically, and it therefore resorts to techniques of the tonal idiom. The loss of a specifically harmonic structuring device is perceptible -- and the arithmetical meticulateness of the works is no compensation.

The virtues of twelve-tone technique are its own in theory only. This is due to the inherent inability to sustain differentiation; it is also due to the collapse of contrast: the effect of twelve-tone counterpoint is not -- if the compositions are the basis of judgment -- the placing of voice freely against voice, but of a row appearing against its derivations. The indepen-

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[49] Jameson, pp. 29-30.

dence of each note tends to the independence of each voice. They are juxtaposed by an act of hostility, counteracted to some extent by the importing of the imitation device to prevent the blatant collapse of a work threatened by the impoverishment of its own principle of contrast.

Twelve-tone technique has confused the art of polyphony with rules for composing fugues, writes Adorno. For example, Schoenberg claims he learned from Bach the following points: to think in terms of figures that accompany themselves; to produce everything from one thing by transformations; to disregard strong beats of the bar.[50] The first two of these are, presumably, the same for Schoenberg; and for the latter lesson one need not go to Bach and thus give the impression that the disregarding of strong beats in a bar is especially a feature of counterpoint: it is characteristic of Beethoven scherzi, for that matter. Even overlooking these minor features, the lesson seems an odd one for Bach to give. Bach's teaching is that contrapuntal writing is to contain smooth and indepentdly meaningful voices that do not obscure the leading voice, that there is to be accurate harmony, as well as sensitively designed dovetailing of heterogeneous elements by the use of an interesting pivotal (interpretive) figure. It is the fact that he wrote polyphony in this rich manner, and not merely in accordance with the rules per se for polyphony that justifies Bach's eminent position in this area. His work is not as much important for the compilation of voices, as for the unity in a totality of linear progression, harmony, and form.[51]

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50 From a manuscript of Schoenberg's called 'National Music', and quoted in Reich, Schoenberg, p. 175.

51 It was Sibelius' criticism of the Schoenberg school that it was preponderantly technical and not artistic. He understood form to be a consequence of musical content: a proposition Schoenberg, of course, explicitly denied (cf. note 45).

Counterpoint can best be understood perhaps as the joint expression of different dimensions. The expressiveness is the presence of organic form, which takes as its raison d'etre, the reconciliation of possible directions of advance.[52] Now counterpoint in its narrow sense of being a table of rules for twelve-tone technique, ought to be replaced merely by the (accurate) addition of one voice to others. True counterpoint only makes sense when there is to be an overcoming and a drawing out of thematic possibilities. Where there is no longer any sense of a uniting idea which is to be expresses musically by the unfolding form, counterpoint as in twelve-tone technique becomes a routine exercise in neatness.[53] (John Cage's critical quip affords a well-turned summary: he says the best thing to do about counterpoint is what Schoenberg did -- teach it.) The sense of adventure, the dynamics of events, are lost. Counterpoint in this sense is slated to share the fate of melodic rhythm based on contrast: Webern's works really demonstrate the banishment of counterpoint. Here tones are grouped in monotony: mute musical relics.

8. MUSICAL FORM

That reflected and imitated figures are beyond the bounds of twelve-tone technique is largely responsible for this theory's difficulty in handling musical form. And neither has it produced a new sort of extended form. This is no accident: a form which satisfies the essentiality of a piece cannot be constructed when the ele-

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[52] cf. Rufer, p. 83.

[53] cf. Adorno, Philosophy of Modern Music, pp. 94-5.

ments of the work are already subservient to the organization of the compositional technique. (Rufer thinks this is an accident; but he thinks so since he disagrees with Schoenberg's remark that content does not generate apposite form. Thus Rufer can argue that twelve-tone technique 'need not' produce its own form because 'forms only arise from ideas.'[54] He does not give, however, any indication as to how it could produce a new form.) To meet this situation, rhythm assumes the role of theme; and hence there is a tendency towards symmetry. This in turn gives intimations of a formal structure harkening to the pre-critical era before Haydn, namely to structures like rondos, variations, suites. So in a sense '.... the twelve-tone work is "nothing more" than an immense theme and variations with the individual row as theme, a repetition over and over again of the same series of twelve-notes....'[55]

Nevertheless, even the harkening to old forms is but an intimation. Now traditional symmetry is based on symmetrical harmonic relationships. Hence, for example, the need for a reprise in sonata-form: it confirms the key stated in the exposition, resolves the adventures of the development, and is comprehensible as an aesthetic consequent of a process initiated at the beginning of the work. The symmetries of atonal works, on the other hand, have no essence: they are fashioned by force and serve no aesthetic goal. The logical acumen present behind the final product as the syntax of a composition's construction is no substitute for its lack of depth.

Of course twelve-tone technique cannot justify its resemblances to forms which carry marked implications of tonality and development. Thus in the middle period works of Schoenberg (for instance, the Third Quartet) such resemblance of form is renounced,

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54 Rufer, pp. 168-0.

55 Jameson, p. 29.

and the works manifest instead rigid geometrical properties. The idea of the goal of a work -- as essentially typified by the reprise -- is abandoned in preference to the erection of architectural balance. Therefore, instead of development, there is produced, as Adorno remarks, through the juxtaposition of symmetrical surfaces, a musical cubism.[56]

Schoenberg understood there is no stopping here, for the question is, how is structure to become expression without conceding to a romantic element of subjectivity? The answer is laid up in the contradictions inherent in twelve-tone theory. It is this: twelve-tone technique adopts the dynamics of the development it scorns. On the one hand, the technique devalues all dynamic factors, theme, rhythm, figurational stylization, transition and modulation, and thematic development. In short, there is no destiny for a leading voice; there are no individual consequences to draw from it because one row is as functional as any other. On the other hand, however, twelve-tone technique eventually comes to harbour an element of the dynamic which it theoretically rejects. A comparison of the Fourth Quartet or the Piano Concerto to the Third Quartet of Schoenberg reveals that in the former the themes are driven by a desire for continuity. True, it is not the inherent will of the rows for progression; but that there is this will at all -- marking the ultimate aesthetic limitation of the ubiquitous technical rigour -- demonstrates Schoenberg's ability to follow the logic of an idea to its final contradiction.

He has made a composition out of a musical experimentation by displaying an inner momentum, by finally admitting the aesthetic, experiential, and expressive inadequacy of thorough-going nominalism.

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56 "Review of W. Hobson, American Jazz Music, and W. Sargent, Jazz Hot and Hybrid" in Studies in Philosophy and Social Science, Volume IX, 1941, (pp. 167-177), pp. 170, 173.

The row of the Fourth Quartet, for example, has been divided into primary and secondary events corresponding to the traditional theme and working out.[57] And the secondary events are not felt as formal or insincere. From this case alone -- and generally from the late works of Schoenberg where it can be said there is a theme -- it is to be recognized that the practical impossibility of 'remaining at each moment the same distance from a point' comes to assert itself as the possibility of significant formal expression.

Now it is already clear that the autonomy of each tone in a row cannot supply the power of impetus to a row -- primary or secondary. The dynamism is definitely supplied by the composer. But note that in the attempt to avoid the criticism of subjectivism, dynamics are given the status of principles and relegated to the preformative and abstract twelve-tone canons, and thus appear as a methodic revision of a critical and impartial observer. (That is, they make their appearance in the guise of relaxed and remodelled rules of twelve-tone technique as such.) Ultimately there must be -- contrary to Schoenberg's claims -- an intimate symbiosis between the final form of a work and the technique of its construction.

Reflect that the proto-type of standard twelve-tone technical form is the variation as found in pre-Beethovean music. The aesthetic point of interest of the variation is that the modified recurrence of the same ultimately issues in the transcendence of the initial theme via the total emerging of the continually rejuvenated possibilities. Twelve-tone technique, by making the variation form a totality in itself, thus perforce omits the ultimate variant: the possibility of transcendence disappears when everything becomes a permutation of a row. When everything is transmuted, there is nothing that undergoes any alteration.

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57 Reich. Schoenberg, pp. 204-5.

Yet this is just the point. The late works of Schoenberg do admit the thematically novel. Although it is a theoretical objective of twelve-tone technique to deny this traditionally based novelty, the constructivism applied to the secondary level of the row admits precisely what it forbids.

Naturally, too, twelve-tone technique defeats itself just at this point: the admission of the novel is, according to the constructivist rules, arbitrary. And where it is aesthetically most significant, it is thereby theoretically most antagonistic to the formality of the work as a whole. The analytic musical theory that endeavours to separate by high abstraction musical form and aesthetic significance is thus gravely suspect.

Furthermore, to what extent can it truthfully be maintained that twelve-tone dynamics (not twelve-tone dynamics, as Schoenberg might distinguish) are actually new? Were dynamics not present in the roots of all music long before the advent of the twelve-tone theory? And were they not present in experienceable form as vehicular for the expression of tension, direction, feeling in the world? Advanced music's novelty is in the end a gesticulation towards the real freedom of harmonics and the tonality associated with musical form. The final contradiction is that the decay of tonality which fostered the new will of technically grounded expression finds its goal in the enunciation of the old: in memories it seeks the image of the future.

CHAPTER III

SOME DERIVATIVE NOTIONS: SCHOENBERG, STRAVINSKY, AND MODERN TIMES

1. VIRTUE, RISK, AND THEIR AVOIDANCE

Constantly risking rejection, the Schoenberg school theoretically follows a nominalism in composition. The consequences are drawn from its premises. Schoenberg's fidelity to the guiding power of the theory is virtually unshakeable: he does not wholly sacrifice the elaboration of the musical twelve-tone style to the fashions of art in a bourgeois culture. In refraining therefrom he does sacrifice the illusion of musical verisimilitude in such a culture. He is conscious of this, and, given his understanding of twelve-tone technique as the necessary historical culmination of Wagnerian chromaticism, would likely regard bourgeois verisimilitude as incompatible with the state of consciousness that generated the technique for his style. This incompatibility is obvious, in fact, when it is noted that the liberated consciousness generative of the technique has its logical terminus in the negation of the order which has brought it thus far.[1]

It follows from such a negativity that the school of twelve-tone technique neither claims nor feigns -- but denies -- any responsibility to a public as such. Schoenberg wrote in 1934: 'I have for a long time known that I cannot live to see widespread understanding of my works, and my far-famed resoluteness is a matter of dire necessity arising from the wish to see it for all that. I have set my goal far enough ahead to be sure that the reluctant and even

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[1] T.W. Adorno. Versuch über Wagner, quoted as a reference in Jameson, Marxism and Form, pp. 22, 34.

the resistant will some day have to arrive there.'[2] Were such a concern thought to be genuine and thus acted upon, there would be an injustice committed to the liberated subject of the music: its essentiality -- what makes it true to its era -- would be violated. Schoenberg himself said that music was not to be decorative; it was to be true.[3] His work and his theory are open-ended because he takes one logical step after another, not claiming at any one moment to conceive of a comprehensive totality applicable to music that would render it authentic to mankind as such. In this sense, his music is best regarded as the encounters of a conscious subject with socially given material. Thus his work leaves open the possibility for a positive re-establishing of responsibility.[4]

Schoenberg views art as having an obligation to fulfil requirements given by the state of consciousness which determines its own material. The suppressed proposition (or perhaps it is just a hope) in taking this position to be the case is that such a fulfilment of consciousness, though commencing without articulate foresight, nevertheless transcends by the necessity of its own logic every merely personal concern from which it proceeds. The criticism of this position is the layman's, namely that most of us are not equal to the rigors of a relentless objective logic. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Schoenberg's renunciation of the illusion of verisimilitude is the mark indicating the authenticity of his twelve-tone technique.

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2 From Schoenberg's official letter of thanks to those who sent him greetings on his sixtieth birthday. Quoted in Reich, Schoenberg, p. 196.

3 Reich, p. 134.

4 Thomas Mann. Doctor Faustus (New York: Modern Library, 1948), p. 491.

There are dangers in adhering to this view of music. It is, for example, naive to expect more from the probity of the art work than it can accomplish as such in its social setting. In doing precisely this, the Schoenberg school endangers its technique. This risk, though, must be balanced by the possibility of the gain, which in this case is a heightened artistic sense that is beyond the so-called objectivity the public claims to understand. The artistic sense is the development of the means and ability to evaluate a work in terms of its inherent correctness to critically recognized desiderata. It is at this point that a second danger reveals itself. Such an honoured objectivity conceals its own nemesis: the autonomy it wins by its enlightenment is paid for by its becoming (on the material level) heteronomous, that is, alienated or thoughtlessly accomodated and tolerated merely as another atomized entity.[5]

Schoenberg wrote in a letter to his brother-in-law:

> 'But although I'm not ashamed of a composition's having a healthy constructive basis even when I've consciously manufactured it, i.e., when it is less good than when it is a spontaneous result, produced unconsciously, I still don't care to be regarded as a constructor on account of the bit of juggling I can do with series, because that would be doing too little to deserve it. I think more has to be done to deserve such a title, and actually I think I am capable of fulfilling the considerable demands made on me by those entitled to do so.'

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5 Jameson, p. 22.

6 Stein. Schoenberg Letters, p. 165.

He wanted to be regarded as a composer, not a technician. And so he has generally, or at least is becoming so; for Schoenberg not long ago was one of the most discussed and least performed composers. His place in the epoch is changing: he is becoming incorporated.

> 'In the United States there are as many ways of writing music as there are composers. There is also no available information as to what is going on. There is no magazine concerned with modern music. Publishers are not inquisitive .... In New York City, the League of Composers and the International Society for Contemporary Music have fused, the new organization representing the current interest in consolidating the acquisitions of Schoenberg and Stravinsky. This circle has, no doubt, an avant-garde, but it is a cautious one, refusing risk.'[7]

It is mentioned above that the over-arching formalization of twelve-tone technique prompts an act of violence upon the musical elements. Now the formalization of corporations over-arches even twelve-tone theory and the avant-garde is driven to acts of violence performed upon the music-producing elements: in one of his 'compositions' Cage, with the assistance of three of his promising students, demolishes a grand piano with sledge hammers.

It is noteworthy, for comparison, that music becoming another consumer item is precisely what happens to the works of Igor Stravinsky -- but in his case it is done willfully. He spares himself the years of the lonely agony of rejection by treating music as a producer does his wares for the consumer. His music -- from the Firebird to his neoclassical period and following -- approaches more the practical joke than it does communication. He fabricates an objectivity in accordance with his anti-individualism claims by employing the device of incorporating within his works thematic allusions to well-known popular works (like Rossini's Overture to the Barber of Seville or Beethoven's Eighth Symphony

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[7] John Cage. Silence, p. 52.

or ragtime piano style).[8] In his compositions the will to style replaces the emergence of style itself, and therewith objectivity that proceeds from the nature of the musical material and principles themselves is not revealed. But neither is subjectivity. 'The value and direction of Stravinsky's artistic practice may be judged ultimately by the long series of neoclassical pastiches which succeed the Russian period. For here the bias toward musical objectivity may be openly observed at work in the way in which the composer renounces his own voice, abdicating that personal style which has become problematical in modern times and speaking through the fossilized subjectivity of dead composers ....'[9]

The deception of the pastiche and the aloofness of any personal gesture to communicative expression marks Stravinsky's belief in the decay of the subject. Schoenberg's music contests this claim; but meanwhile Stravinsky insists that the denial of the subject is his preservation on a higher level.[10] His neoclassicism reveals a mythical metaphysics nobody really wants. The withered subject is not at all the same -- on any level -- as the objective spirit. And even if it were, this would not justify Stravinsky's music because his theories are uncritical; the objective spirit of contemporary society is a false one. Serious compositions which are also popular are typified by one characteristic: disillusion. Adorno elaborates:

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8 Jameson, p. 34.

9 Jameson, pp. 33-4.

10 These traits are borne out in the first article Stravinsky wrote for publication: 'Some Ideas About My Octuor', The Arts, 1924. Reprinted in E.W. White, Stravinsky, pp. 528-531.

'All these composers [of popular works], among them Stravinsky and Hindemith have expressed an "anti-romantic" feeling. They aimed at musical adaptation to reality, -- a reality understood by them in terms of the "machine age". The renunciation of dreaming by these composers is an index that listeners are ready to replace dreaming by adjustment to raw reality, that they reap new pleasure from their acceptance of the unpleasant. They are disillusioned about any possibility of realizing their own dreams in the world in which they live, and consequently adapt themselves to this world. They take what is called a realistic attitude and attempt to harvest consolation by identifying themselves with the external social forces which they think constitute the "machine age". Yet the very disillusion upon which their coordination is based is there to mar their pleasure.'

2. THE TECHNIQUE OF STATIC SOUND - NOTES ON A CANVAS

Stravinsky's music is on the periphery of that which is significant because its general technique of joining bits of remembered remnants precludes the development of a composition out of the musical material itself and avoids the confrontation of music and time. These are the bases of all great music. Ignoring time by rhythmic manipulation[12] is not novel in Stravinsky, despite the appearance of Le sacre du printemps in 1913.

In fact, it is from the very Impressionism that Sacre denies that Stravinsky learned[13] this method of side-stepping time. Listen to Debussy: the untrained ear listens to the Preludes as an overture to a main act that never arrives; it ends by feeling unfulfilled: 'What! Wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?' The ear

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11 "On Popular Music" in Zeitschrift Für Sozial-Forschung, IX: 1941, (pp. 17-48), p. 41.

12 White. Stravinsky, p. 517.

13 IBID., p. 516.

must for Debussy learn a new mode of listening, if it is to make sense of the music. It must learn, specifically, to refrain from listening in the context of tension and release, opposition and coalition, and rather listen as the eye sees a painting; namely, listen to perceive a juxtaposition of sound-colours and lines and surface levels. The sensory presentation to the ear in the music of Impressionism thus appears as only successive, for what is presented is conceived as siumltaneous. The ear wanders over the noisy canvas.

This is accomplished by a method not dissimilar to the rules of twelve-tone technique: the employment of a harmonic scheme that substitutes mere change of chord for modulation or transition based on passing or leading notes. Hence five characteristics of Impressionist music: the meagre treatment of form (there is no development as such of the thematic material); the acquisition of the character of a salon piece; the lack of counterpoint; heightened -- not necessarily exaggerated -- colouration; and the absence of any formal ending (the music, like a painting, terminates when the viewer turns his back on it, so to speak).

The refusal to indicate a process in time results in a suspension apparently designed for the sake of it, perhaps to compensate for the intuition revealing its own mortality. Ravel's popular piano piece, 'Jeux d'eau' (written in 1901), is an example of Impressionism. Although this piece is written in sonata form, Ravel did not take advantage of such form at this time as a key to the transcendence of Impressionism. He later, however, did regard dynamic progression as highly important. Instead of turning to standard tonality, he received inspiration from medieval modes.[14] The difficulty in this case is to produce significant dynamics without cadences, which are not found in modal scales. By using the

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[14] Roland-Manuel. Maurice Ravel (New York: Douer, 1947), p. 112.

faux-bourdon effect, he obtains an interesting tension between progressiveness and static juxtaposition. (There is more significant development in his great Gaspard de la nuit (1908) than in Le Tombeau de Couperin (1920), which might be one reason for the general opinion that the former is the peak of Ravel's pianistic output.[15])

Furthermore, the undynamic and undevelopmental character of French Impressionism finds its roots in many of Wagner's works, where thematic or harmonic progression is tantamount to replacement and repetition of intervalic successions. Busoni understood[16] the characteristic of Wagner's music: every peaceful beginning is followed by a rapid upward movement, upon the reaching of which another expansion begins. So the music itself has no goal to be reached by sequential progression: it is based on a displacement or replacement principle. Dynamics are here a consequence of a compositional procedure. The Wagnerian Gesamkunstwerk is the giant container providing the hint for making co-existent all that was successive. The Impressionists and Stravinsky followed suit; and it results in the barest semblance of musical form.

An analogy exists between the transition from Debussy to Strevinsky and from Impressionism to Cubism in painting. It signifies the demise of music in essence. If it can be said the task of painting is the expression of pathos in what is, then music's is to prevent a becoming of what is to be. In painting is given an enveloping feeling; in music, a feeling developing. Stravinsky evades exactly this. And on one occasion during an interview he refused to discuss one of his works, claiming it was simply there -- one object among all others: a senseless entity, then, uncritically tolerated

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15 IBID., p. 54.

16 F. Busoni "Sketch of a New Aesthetics of Music" in Three Classics in the Aesthetics of Music. (New York: Dover, 1962)

and assumed to supply its own justification by its fictional existence as a piece of music. 'For already the privileged form in which Stravinsky works, the ballet, may be seen as a kind of applied music, which even more drastically than the program music that is contemporary with it reinvents a kind of distance between content and form within a medium that is otherwise non-representational. Thus it is able to avoid the problems of self-justification and self-determination faced by pure music ....'[17] and resolved in one manner by the Schoenberg school. In short, Stravinsky can point to the tableau and dancers as ratifying his music; there need be nothing intrinsic to the music providing its impetus. Schoenberg injects momentum into his works by sheer exercise of will, but Stravinksy uses the world of objects as the focal point of sound-creations.

Stravinsky learned from Debussy the technique of building melodic blocks and treating them in a harmonically colourful manner. Stravinsky's contribution to the history of music lies in removing the merest suggestion of the dynamic-formal procedure found sometimes in Debussy.

> 'The garish and overloaded orchestration, barbaric rhythms and savagely applied discords of Stravinsky's ballets temporarily numb the critical faculties, and prevent one from realizing that however different the texture may be, Stravinsky is using sound in the same way as Debussy. Barbaric impressionism has taken the place of super-civilized impressionism - that is all.'[18]

When Stravinsky went to Paris in 1910 with the Firebird, his music was in the brilliant rhetoric of Rimsky-Korsakoff. In Paris he learned of Impressionism especially from Erik Satie's

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17 Jameson, pp. 31-2.

18 C. Lambert. Music Ho!, p. 47.

work of the 1890's. Three years after Firebird he returned to Paris with the score that extends the tendencies of the Parisian school to their static conclusions: Sacre. Almost all the pieces therein are composed by the juxtaposition of several ostinato figures distributed among the orchestra. For instance, there are uninterrupted sixteenth note figures (some extending for fifty-eight bars), long suspensions to sustain tension, and extensive repetition of material.[19]

The music of Debussy is not incoherent: the harmonic complexed usually gently reverberate along side one another, often producing a most tranquil effect. Stravinsky, though, deals sharply with the thematic blocks, and produces sounds in sharp contrasts while stratifying dynamics into disconnected spasms. He adopted a dry-sounding technique and a palette of tone colours, and allowed silence to fill the interstices between instrumental sound clusters. In the early works of the Russian period Stravinsky used a rhythm in constant repetition to achieve an almost machine-like relentlessness; and later he broke up the meter to create irregular and spasmodic outbursts of phrases.[20]

The evocation of atmosphere, for which Impressionism is noted, and which also permitted the music to retain some connection to the expression of temporal experience, is not to be found in Stravinsky's music. Instead, he seems to be dealing in a type of response people have to the social epoch. The ubiquity of technique responsible for the arrival and the perpetuation of the so-called machine age has become for many a scheme for the life process itself; and whoever does not desire to be overcome (in one way or another) by the era can always react to it the way Stravinsky's music does: obediently.

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19 Cf. C. Chavez. Musical Thought. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 69-72.

20 White. Stravinsky, pp. 516-17.

What in this music does not groan from an absence of high quality experience? -- that is, what is here unaffected by the substitution of formulae for life?[21] It is dolorously apposite -- indeed if not quite unavoidable -- that there is no longer in music a heroic encounter with time in the very epoch wherein mankind has fashioned itself unto a mere thing, falling prey to its own potential for subservience to self-inflicted authoritarianism.

> 'This sadnesse moved Dr. Faustus that he made note of his lamentacyon.'

The result of this tendency in music has produced similar effects in the twelve-note system, too. The compositions of Webern, for example, bespeak the shrinking of duration to a mere gesture at most. And also the rigidity of the twelve-tone technique, its works proceeding without a development as such, certainly ignores anything not internal to it -- including the dynamics of temporal experience. The similarity, Adorno cautions, cannot be pushed farther. Whileas in the Schoenberg school time sometimes makes its appearance as a shadowy notion lurking somewhere in the deep structure of the technique as a composer's deliberate organizational principle of variation or continuation, in Stravinsky's work time takes upon itself the presumptuous task of establishing some sort of one to one correspondence between itself and spatial dimensionality. The works employ shock, surprise, and interruption to execute this. If it is successful, the auditor forgets about the experience of time and sits gawking with wide open ears at the montage of noise. It is as though the composition proclaims the cessation of the breath of life by objectifying it in his own convulsive manner.

Of course, the montage effect is Stravinsky's signature. He presents several progressions simultaneously, that is, as though they were static in relation to each other. This creates an interesting performance -- at first. But this cute device soon becomes stale when grown accustomed to. Then it is revealed there is no

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21 Cf. Adorno, Philosophy of Modern Music, p. 194.

continuity in the music at all; rather only heteronomy. Hence boredom in this stylized monotony. Colles relates that Stravinsky's manner of composition entails '.... an endless series of fresh starts, new experiments, the study of this or that model (perhaps previously ignored or even despised) on which to base a specialist view of it and to which to apply a brilliant technique as an end in itself.'[22] Bartok, for example, whose technique is no less masterly, always has brilliance of scoring subservient to the idea seeking expression.

Stravinsky has rejected every device expressing becomingness: transition, differentiation between tension and release, exposition and continuation, question and answer. To the same extent every artistic effect he attempts fails because for him music is overburdened with a false metaphysics. Listening to his works composed after around 1930 there is some puzzlement as to their sounding the same -- in a perverse way.[23] It is not that he has nothing to say; but that whatever he tries to express is distorted by music's being given over to the canons of painting. The advice of neo-classicism is to continue structuring works in the traditional manner, but to resurface them in some fashionable manner.

In Stravinsky's case there is another factor hindering significant expression. It is his adherence to the dance-ballet. Stylized dance is flowing sculpture; exquisite dancing occurs to the degree that a sensitive mind is enraptured by the potently expressive shapes traced by motion units, and is not so much engaged in watching the mere movements as such of the artists. Thus dancing is not designed to express cumulative or developmental time processes: its character is to move without advancing to anywhere. Hence the importance of gesture and shape over serially developing contrasts and dynamics. If becomingness can be characterized as a vaulting

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22 Growth of Music, Part III, p. 185.

23 Cf. Adorno. Philosophy of Modern Music, p. 196.

into novel adventure while also recapitulating a past and anticipating a future, then dance can be seen as rotation round (what is for it) a fixed centre. It may have been the slow entry to consciousness of this idea that ushered in sonata form to replace older dance forms. Like life, the sonata is more variegated, adventurous, developmental, and organic -- thus more expressive (or interpretive).

Because of the alienness of the character of development to music designed for the dance, such music does not -- as Stravinsky assumed -- transcend even subjective dynamics, let alone the organic objectivity of sonata-form itself. Hence there is in Stravinsky an awkward restoration of the past, comparable to the backward gaze of the twelve-tone school: again the past is brought to the present in the guise of harbinger of the future. 'Neo-classicism, in reverting to the past, avoids, by refusing to recognize, the contemporary need for another structure [besides harmony], gives a new look to structural harmony. This automatically deprives it of the sense of adventure essential to creative action (sic).'[24]

It is also unfortunate that Stravinsky does not see the symbolic transformations that obtain among gesture (in the dance) and sound (as in the thematic material). But then perhaps Stravinsky's music for the ballet does not intend to express that cross-reference of the public and the individual which dance can accomplish so elegantly. In the ballets, the music and the dancers are quite distinct. They seem to 'dance to the beat of their own drum', as though alone in a separate reality.

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[24] Cage, Silence, p. 63 n.

3. META-MUSIC AND NEOCLASSICISM

The tendency to borrow themes from other compositions and integrate them into the elaboration of another work could well mark the end of musical romanticism. Soon after Wagner -- in fact, after the death of Brahms in 1897 -- it seemed inspiration was lacking and thematic motives were in short supply. Among these feelings atonal technique was developed. The release it offered from the feeling that 'it had all been done already ' was an escape into freedom. Such a relief from worn out material of expression of course brings with it the collapse of what was commonly regarded as melody.[25]

Stravinsky, the critic of individualism, does not permit expressions of pathos in his music. Three aspects of his works follow therefrom: the music is not bound up with the process of living, but remains distant and mechanical; compositional spontaneity is checked by the restriction placed upon personal expression, and the final outcome as the works is a shallow intonation of a musical language from which the individual is alienated.

These characteristics are apparent in L'Histoire du soldat (1918). It is at first effective due to its exploitation of the heteronomy existing between the literary subject-matter and the music.[26] (The work is an 'opera' with speech and dance, but not singing, an orchestra of seven players, and an idiom based on jazz.) Unlike Schoenberg's compositions, there is no musical material here as such. A kind of second-order meta-language results from the manipulation of irregularly phrased sounds: it is a residue from the language of music, but it is synthetic, insensitive, and imposing -- in short, technological.

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25 Rufer, pp. 15-16.

26 White, pp. 233-4.

In 1917 Ernst Block declared[27] that 'Wagnerism' and 'Debussyism' had passed into the new 'aesthetic of the bored ones' whose creations were of wit and not of feeling. He described the tendency thus:

> 'Here is a new criterion; and all our musicians, artists, critics are touched by it in some degree. When I say that they are not free, I mean that an intellectual barrier exists between their emotions and their work -- a sort of sensory perversion that twists their thoughts, their inspiration, and warps their taste. They are forever thinking of the development of their art, not as the corollary of a logical growth of thought, not as a spontaneous expression of life, but as a thing-in-itself, apart from life. And the truth is that they neither understand nor are they interested in anything so much as the elaboration of their technique.'

But Stravinsky did not always remain at such a level. He also turned his metamusical talents to commercialized idioms. He might compose a ridiculous polka or galop to flatter the jazz enthusiast, for example. Sometimes he might parody a great composer like Schubert. These antics betray an ambivalent attitude towards an authority-establishing public: on the one hand the works might be critical; but on the other, it is only a fake way of beating time, since Stravinsky parodies only those changing fashions sanctioned by public forces. There is a disconcerting respect for authority in his work.[28] Authority is better dealt with by absorbing it into the critical effort of an inspired production. Stravinsky's musical games are a substitute for revolutionary impulse, i.e., responsibility to the culture: remaining within the commodity universe, he '.... evolves the newest production techniques to restore a little

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27 "Man and Music" and reprinted in Morgenstern, Composers On Music, p. 413.

28 Cf. Adorno, Philosophy of Modern Music, p. 172.

of the emotional shock for his easily jaded public, with its increasingly rapid exhaustion of new products.' [29]

It is suggested in some moments of Wagner that the technical contrivance of the work takes precedence over inspiration, where inspiration is the gay abandon of the artist in the face of possibilities in which the uncoerced musical material for expression is bountifully rich. The scholar, however, would wish to quite envelope by consciousness the moment of inspiration: thus having it appear normal that the artist rule both the musical material and the muses. The great and the dilettante aspects of Wagner are, as Mann recognized, two species of one kind. [30] In this respect Schoenberg and his school have adopted the Wagnerian character: side by side exist the delightful reliance on creative genius and the conscious control of the musical material.[31] This blinds them to the spiritual import of their music: they seek musical self-sufficiency, and yet work according to the scheme of the music-drama. This characteristic is also evident in Stravinsky's neoclassical period. Once that artificial moment -- the fabricated preformative procedure determining the musical material before actual composition commences -- once this is made conscious, how can the theorists claim that -- and the composers believe that -- the new procedure of writing music is the true and pure expression of a free soul in free sound! [32]

Neoclassicism in Stravinsky is as commercial as it is popular: it satisfies the casual listener by sounding somewhat familiar and yet can be labeled modern. It is of a kind with surrealist art that lets itself be commercialized. Lambert notes Stravinsky largely uses the idiom of the eighteenth century dance forms -- adapting its

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[29] Jameson, p. 396.

[30] "Sufferings and Greatness of Richard Wagner" in Essays of Three Decades, trans. H.T. Lowe-Porter, (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1947) pp. 307 - 52.

[31] Rufer, pp. 21-3.

unromantic flavour to his already restricted employment of the subjective. 'The jot he [Stravinsky] gives the machine consists, on the whole, in a complete confusion between the expressive and formal context of the eighteenth century style. In Stravinsky's adaptation the expressive element is treated in a mechanical way, and purely conventional formulae of construction are given pride of place.'[33]

The conventionality of the structure comes to conventionalize the subject as well,[34] and a tasteless sort of sympathy is found in the company of his use of the shock technique in creating the montage effect: the music is conformist in its appeal to authority. Beneath a cloak of false objectivism it conceals its disregard for the subject by its superficial comprehensibility that is tantamount to the portrayal of the reactionary expounding on tradition to save it from collapse.

> 'Both Petroushka and the Rite of Spring dramatize the sacrifice of individual subjectivity to an inhuman collectivity, and their deliberate primitivism (with its appeal to folk culture in Petroushka or L'Histoire du Soldat, and with its elemental, archaic, well-nigh prehistoric rhythms in the Rite of Spring) solicit the regression of their sophisticated listener/spectator toward a kind of sacrifice of the intellect in the sheer emotionalism of mass response.'[35]

The will to style reveals its repressive genesis. Whenever the supposed need for form has been borrowed from a former style, there is perpetuated a misconception that form is coercive. If any

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32 The contradiction of freedom of expression and absolute control by the technique over each element of a work is brilliantly displayed in Mann's Doctor Faustus, pp. 486-90.

33 Music Ho!, p. 75.

34 IBID., pp. 84-5.

35 Jameson, p. 32.

form, however, does not prove itself by its own transparent function in a work that entitles it to live, if a form is instantiated merely that there be some form or other, then such a form is false to its material and hence inadequate as a form itself.

Restorative conservatism and fascism unite (as always) in a protest against modern art.[36] Modern art stands for all the chances missed for emancipation of threatened individuality. In such a desperate situation, individuals seek a firm footing (or consolation and security) in the stability of an ever-the-sameness of form: witness popular songs and jazz. At the same time, it is dimly noticed that really no form is wholly adequate in its soothing virtues. Hence another, heteronomous formal pattern is introduced, and always with the assumption that this form perforce enter from outside the content to be formalized: witness Stravinsky's works of the neo-classic period and following. These heteronomously introduced forms are then regarded as self-generated and beyond essential criticism, as the reasons justifying whatever is so formalized by them, and as indicative of the stance the personnel are to adopt in their domination by corporate (formal) persons. That is, there is a fake reconcilement of individual and environment. Fake because the elements are disparate and are found together only by the agency of an act of violence. Consciousness now cannot experience anything not pigeon-holed in terms of the formal categories it is disposed to think of as invariable. This prejudice of the socially indoctrinated mind thus in fancy transforms that which is not altering presently into that which is immutable: cycles of repetition are confused with permanence. Whether, then, in music and art, or ethics and economics, there is silent and passive acceptance of established order-systems because the imprisoned mind feels them as eternal. The nature of

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[36] T.W. Adorno, Negative Dialectics, p. 95.

things is not so symmetrical as Stravinsky thinks: self-estranged and negated subjectivity is not the logically actual equivalent of self-conscious and positive objectivity.

Both Stravinsky and Schoenberg have transformed a means of producing music into the final product itself: the result is a neutered language not bearing, but adopting from outside itself, its significance. The twelve-tone row supplies bricks but no structural plan -- that is, musical material but no scheme of a dynamic form for compositions. Neoclassicism advocates a scheme but offers no bricks -- that is, reverts to traditional dynamic forms but is bereft of import due to weak thematic treatment.[37] In Schoenberg the advance from free atonality or Expressionism to the architectonic twelve-tone technique receives its impetus from fidelity to the compositional procedures and the possibilities it suggests. There is in Stravinsky, however, no trace of such risk and rigor. His neoclassicism is still of the meta-music genre, but by and large the parody is absent: the music neither extols nor ridicules. The appeal to authority is still present: he adopts a conventional form but shirks the responsibility owed to it. Perhaps blur the tonality or introduce an arbitrary and unexpected figure. It might seem at first like avant-garde cynicism of authority. But the music emphasizes the convention as much as it distorts it: -- the very fact that a conventional form is used at all indicates not the justice owed to it as such, but an acknowlegment of the irresistable compulsion of traditionally defined power structures in the face of the subject's denial of the will to live.

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[37] Cage, p. 64 n.

Stravinsky's neoclassic period is best known by the presence of the so-called symphonies:

> 'Anyone who believes these to be real symphonies cannot be aware of the nature of symphonic thought. If Stravinsky himself is aware of it, he clearly does not wish to develop it here, in works so vividly balletic in character. Within their own circumscribed terms they are highly organized, but the motion of symphony is absent. They are exclusively concerned with rhythm and texture rooted in primitive monolithic tonality; when one (or a combination) of these has transiently performed enough of its function, it is replaced, and the total effect, however internally agitated, is as static as the stage upon which dancers are gyrating. Because so famous a composer has made use of the title 'symphony' we need not be over-awed into a fundamental denial of principle. The more characteristic a work of Stravinsky, the further it is from the symphonic idea; if this is not obvious to his admirers, they must surely admire him for other than his best features.'[38]

The works of his neoclassicism are typified by the employment of the chosen classical scheme. The works are without the presentation of continuity that the form provides when judiciously invoked. Thus various figures -- like suspensions and pedal effects -- are used outside the context for which they were designed. Suspension and pedals are used without preparation, release, or progression. This, in fact, is precisely Stravinsky's indiscrete joke. Therefore the style of meta-music is obtained: blocks of harmony or rhythm or motivic figures are jumbled heteronomously together. Musical meaning, therefore, that is always found in the company of organic development, is denied in such compositions. When the classical form being employed is recognized, the music itself is incoherent;

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[38] Robert Simpson in the 'Introduction' to The Symphony, Volume II, (Baltimore: Penguin, 1967), p. 11.

when the form is not recognized, the music's modish sounding 'progressive' effects are enough to prompt easy digestion and claims of intelligibility by a public increasingly dominated by an authoritarian principle of the kind to which in the music they are blind.

It would be incredible if all Stravinsky's works were of the quality of Le Baiser de la Fée (1928), the chorale of L'Histoire du soldat (1918), the Concerto for Piano and Winds (1923), the Symphony of Psalms (1930), or the ballet Apollo Musagetes (1928). In his continuing attempts to write using established form, Stravinsky has produced some intense and genuinely pleasurable works: namely, the Concerto for Two Pianos (1931), the Violin Concerto (1931), the Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra (1929), and the Symphony in Three Movements (1945). The flaws that do not permit these compositions to be judged as masterpieces, however, generally result from the continued employment of the meta-music theory. The expressive power of the Violin Concerto, for example, is greatly hindered by an opaque tonality: Stravinsky is neither tonal nor twelve-tone ('atonal'), but rather characterizes himself as 'anti-tonal'.[39] The result of such fence-perching is that the notes at best -- or at worst -- merely sound 'wrong', as though the manuscript were smudged. Palestrina with wrong notes, as Jameson puts it.[40] It engenders the suspicion for evidence of expression repressed by the unseasoned management of musical resources. The Concerto for Two Pianos[41] is dismal in the last movement which is to be a fugue: it is short and undeveloped. It denies the three movements preceeding it, for the polyphonic texture cannot be erected from blocks of figures and harmonies and without the (dynamically significant) devices of transition, modulation, and continuity.

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39 Morgenstern, p. 450.

40 p. 34.

41 White, pp. 349-53.

4. FAKE OBJECTIVITY

Stravinsky, then, who, unlike Schoenberg, has divorced himself from the evolutionary current of modern times, shows himself as a reactionary by quoting the past as a justification for his siding with a powerful and rigid, adminstrative and commercial, hierarchy that beneath a facade of humanitarian diplomacy and liberality instigates conformism and extinguishes the zest for vibrantly significant individual experience.

> 'The authoritarian character of today is, without exception, conformist; likewise the authoritarian claim of Stravinsky's music is extended totally and completely to conformism. In the final analysis, this music tends to become the style for everyone, because it coincides with the man-in-the-street style in which they have always believed and to which this music automatically directs them again.... Those who long for the adminstration of society through direct domination by force continually acclaim the traditional values which they wish to preserve from ruin. From this point, in like manner, objectivist music [neo-classical, especially] appears as the force of preservation, proclaiming its own victory. Out of the disintegration of the subject it designs for itself the formula of the aesthetic integration of the world .... The farewell trick of Stravinsky -- who otherwise, in an elegant gesture, renounced everything astonishing -- is the enthroning of the self-forgetten negative as the self-conscious positive.'[42]

The artful and illogical ruse of feigning individual salvation by means of self-denial to the point of annihilation is a tactic more commonly ecmployed by the vain behaviourist -- psychologist rex. It is, though, applicable to Stravinsky's music; and is in accord with the culture industry's artistic incorporation of mankind.

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42 Adorno. Philosophy of Modern Music, pp. 204-5.

There is little more droll than witnessing the psychologist amassing data on rats for the purpose of demonstrating the nominalistic thesis that living is without purpose. In a similar vein, Stravinsky's music indulges the egotistical desire to shed the ego, thus affording entry to the hallowed hollow halls of the contemporary collectivisation -- blunderingly referred to as culture.

The ways in which people listen and do not listen are as much indicative of the times in which a musical style can be conceived and flourish as is what is said and not said in the literature, drama, and musical form of an epoch. Ways of listening polarize at two extremes: the dynamic and the mathematical. The former discloses the becomingness of organic process in what is heteronomously serialized in time. The latter is the toe-tapping repetition of beats in a bar. The conditions generating the polarization are also those separating subject and object: this makes its musical appearance by treating the means for individual expression just as other <u>things</u>, things 'in space, in the real world' -- and how the personnel today crave participation in what the 'real world' is taken to be. Complementarily, what appears as objective is treated as though it were <u>merely</u> objective: denying the integrity of a subject, harsh, and wholly externalized.

The philosophic mind knows that neither pole is ultimately adequate: the idea of comprehending great music is to successfully amalgamate these two general types of listening, as well as discerning the moments and modes of compositions suited to these listening types. Sonata-form achieved the short-lived Parnassian union of discipline and freedom: Adorno suggests it learned from the dance the importance of rhythmic regularity and the general conception of gesture, figure, and balance attending an entire

extended work, and from the song it learned to transform the lyric moment from its tendency to remain content within itself to an integrated phase of a creative advance into adventure. The repetitive rhythmic time-beating (the exclusiveness of which today almost transfigures music to a spatial entity) is fused with experienceable developmental time in a happy moment wherein the sonata preserves its self-identity as a virtual feature of its form.

The negation Stravinsky claims as the new objectivity is the swaggering of an ideology: the music does not present any such objectivity. Whatever is regarded as its effectiveness in the ears of the contemporary listener has its genesis in a clandestine manoeuver: it does not proceed from the music as such or a logic of its technical treatment, but rather from its grimace directed at the auditor. The objectivity it claims is the embellished dehumanization of an arbitrarily chosen manner of arrangement; and the music collects adherents and admirers by manipulating those principles of demogogy to which the epoch is all too accustomed.

The compositional effect is the elimination of the expression of becomingness: the subject is here regard as the dis-ease of the object. Therefore, the object is removed from its reach and starkly stands aloof counterfeiting liberation and absolute self-sufficiency. Meanwhile, the loss of all meaning in musical form serves to intensify the illusion that, since there is an absence of developmental and organic dynamics, the object has achieved a state of eternity![43]

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43 'The meaning of the composition is sempre marcato. Its objectivity is a subjective arrangement, embellished and elevated to the level of super-human a priori validity; it is ordained dehumanization as an ordo. The illusory appearance thereof is produced by a small number of tested measures of technical demogogy which are continually carried out without concern for the changing nature of the cause. All becoming is eliminated, as though it were the contamination of the object itself. The subject is now excluded from any intervening treatment; in this position it pretends to have been liberated from all elaboration and to have achieved self-contained monumentality.' Adorno, Philosphy of Modern Music, p. 201.

In this situation, only a few satanic rhythmic ripples -- administered as shock treatments -- dispel the urge to yawn in the exposure to such dilettante rhetoric.[44]

The objectivity is a replete fraud. According to its doctrine there can be nothing to objectify: the objectivism is a mask of strength and security.[45] The music's real ineffectiveness is evident in the musical thematic material itself which is emasculated and impotent from the start: ignoring its own developmental potentiality, it could acquire the marionette semblance of life only by being the 'stuff' which is packaged for consumption. And yet as Adorno observes, this too Stravinsky resists; not even the attempt at semblance of life. This is his wild ace in the musical jeu des cartes. By not satisfying the expected temptation to effect a manakin reproduction of life he creates a totally ephemeral atmosphere which those with a certain bent of mind regard as the impression of the very quintessence of music!

This is evident in the opera-oratorio Oedipus Rex (1927) and the Symphony of Psalms (1930): the glaring contradiction between

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44 Cf. Adorno, pp. 159-60: 'This tone of objective mourning in Sacre is achieved technically through the predomiance of dissonance, but often by means of condensed orchestral technique .... At the same time, however, it is the tone which imprints a type of dull and ill-humored submissiveness upon this monstrosity of shocks which nonetheless remains weak in contrast, in spite of all the colour lavished upon it. This submissiveness, in the final analysis, consigns what was previously sensational to a boredom which is in no way greatly different from the boredom which Stravinsky later methodically developed. But this very fact, at such an early point, makes it difficult to understand the desire for imitation which Sacre once inspired. The primitivism of yesterday is the naiveté of today.'

45 Adorno. Philosophy of Modern Music, p. 202.

the pretention to monumental greatness and the embittered and pitifully meagre musical content[46] prompts a serious reflection on the role given the Stravinskian caustic wit that is notably absent in these works. Reflection reveals, that is, that much of the superficial appeal to Stravinsky lies in this wit and cleverness, and neither in the musical material itself nor in the subject musically treated.

Stravinsky's popularity is grounded on his insistence -- in the music -- that his compositional scheme is as he claims: objective, liberating, and authentic. It is not authentic because the meta-music theory in his hands does not evolve from the music, but rather is an extra-musical principle for organizing sounds detached from their symbolic (meaningful) import: -- in this case the extra-musical priniple is taken from painting. It is not liberating, first, because the compositions have neither life nor the semblance thereof, and mere negation of life and individuality -- even if thorough-going -- is insufficient to achieve salvation for the reason that the limit of the negating procedure is the denial of the existence of anything requiring salvation; and, second, it is no act of liberation to encourage a public's suicidal penchant for nonresistence to authoritarian command. It is not objective because the principle chosen -- being extra-musical -- is arbitrary and depends on the preferences of the composer. The individually significant character of the chosen classical form is clothed in an aggressive, thick, and vehement style of scoring which merely demands to be viewed as entirely non-personal. But eventually the listener submits to the demand.

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46 See White, pp. 292, 293, 298, 321, 322 for the analysis of these works. In a word, they exploit the rather tame device of juxtaposing major and minor thirds, building long crescendoes and fortes of rhythmic 'can-can'-like passages, and employing the suite form. All this is very similar in effect to the early Firebird.

> 'To be sure, the way in which they must work on the assembly line, in the factory, or at the office denies people any novelty. They seek novelty, but the strain and boredom associated with actual work leads to avoidance of effort in that leisure-time which offers the only chance for really new experience. As a substitute, they crave a stimulant. Popular music comes to offer it. Its stimulations are met with the inability to vest effort in the ever-identical. This means boredom again. It is a circle which makes escape impossible.'[47]

Thus the public frolics in its foolishness, duped by the authoritarian repetition of something which does not exist.[48]

> 'Fayries dance,
> And Christ is nayled to the Crosse.'

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47 T.W. Adorno, "On Popular Music", pp. 38-9.

48 Cf. Adorno. Philosophy of Modern Music, p. 202:
'The convincing force which it [the music of Stravinsky] exerts is due, on the one hand, to the self-suppression of the subject, and on the other to the musical language which has been especially contrived for authoritarian effects. This is most obvious in the emphatic, strikingly dictatorial instrumentation which unites brevity and vehemence. This is all as far removed from that musical cosmos which later generations perceive in Bach, as is the conformism -- superimposed from above -- of an atomized society from the dream image of hermetic culture, based upon a guild economy and an earlier stage of industry .... At first the listener feels that he is confronted by something which is by no means architectural in its structure but totally irregular, and, in its continual transformation, he considers it to be his own image. At the same time, however, the stomping and hammering of it all teaches him something still worse -- its immutability. He has to submit .... The listener is made a fool by means of the authoritarian repetition of something which does not really exist.'

CHAPTER IV

MUSIC'S ROLE IN CIVILIZATION

This review of Hindemith's opera Neves Von Tage (1929) appeared in 1934:

> 'Technical mastery is not an excuse but an obligation. To misuse it for meaningless musical trifles is to besmirch true genius. Opportunity creates not only thieves, but also atonal musicians who in order to make a sensation exhibit on the stage nude women in the bathtub in the most disgusting and obscene situations, and further befoul those scenes with the most atrocious dissonance of musical impotence!'

The sensation of the opera was the scene in which the heroine, reclining in a hotel bath, sings an aria in praise of electric heating. The lyrics commence, 'Constant hot water, no horrid smell, no danger of explosion ....' 'When the work was announced for performance', writes Edward Dent[1], 'at Breslau the local gas company applied for, and obtained, an injunction, as this song was considered damaging to their trade. Opera is taken seriously in Germany.'

Amateur listeners and critics are often unaware that there is a technical reason for experimentation in dissonance. At the turn of this century Europe was under the sway of the feeling that tonality was exhausted. In a sense it was a perspicacious intuition: the ear has the oddest tendency to acclimatize itself to dissonance. The minor third was once considered harsh and had to be resolved by the harmonic device of a tierce de Picardie. But it was eventually agreed that the minor third was a consonant interval. Generally,

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[1] Opera. (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1949), p. 143.

established devices of dissonance become material with which the ear becomes familiar. Then music loses the ability to communicate all that dissonance once expressed so clearly: disorder, pain, tension, desire and longing. So Delius had to add the sixth to final tonic chords to give it some positive flavour.

Dissonance in the twentieth century is used in three situations: to flavour consonance; to strengthen rhythmic accent; to express protest. This last has a socially significant counterpart in the psychology of the individual in the state.

There are many who smile at the correlation of music to the condition of a civilization -- at first, anyway; there are several points to consider before continuing to smile -- at any rate, before continuing to smile for the same reasons. It is no accident that two of the most violent symphonies of this century -- Vaughan Williams' in F minor and William Walton's in B flat minor -- were both written in 1935 when Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia proclaimed violence as the governing force of European politics. These British composers were far enough removed geographically to bring into focus the ideational climate of an era. Their music is not fascist. The cognitive import of art [redacted] to bring the dim reality to clear appearance so that it may be contemplated in tranquility. Odysseus among the shades hearing Homer chant his Odyssey could re-enact with freedom the necessary perils of his journey: as Whitehead says, art is the evasion of the Furies.

If music is symptomatic of the state of society, then the state of society conditions the kind of music produced in a given epoch. (Of course, the music actually produced will be to the credit, or blame, of the composer; but not the kind of music he writes.) Nobody needs the details of a Marxian philosophy of history to understand that sixteenth century polyphony was produced

as much by the impulse of ecclesiastical order as it was by religious faith; that eighteenth century opera was as much the outcome of a leisurely wealthy society wherein opera expressed feelings not open to this century's formality, as well as its re-discovered joy in singing for the sake of singing well; that the rhetoric of the orchestra after Beethoven owes as much to the franchized bourgeoisie as to the technical improvement of wind instruments; or that the folk-song flourishes in the countryside and that jazz befits American negroes living impoverishedly in urban waterfront ghettoes. Musical types are shaped by social conditions.

Many factors are components in the generation of a prevailing social climate, two of which are social organization and economic conditions. There are also the intellectual movements of the fifteenth through nineteenth centuries directing the spirit of man: the Renaissance, Reformation, Scientific methodology, Rationalism, Romanticism. Views on music have changed in the wake of larger movements of thought. To Morley in the sixteenth century, for example, music was a 'ladder to the intelligence of higher things', while to Burney in the eighteenth century, it was 'an innocent luxury, unnecessary indeed to our existence, but a great improvement and gratification to the sense of hearing.'[2] This latter utilitarian view is in conformity to Baconian philosophy, Cartesian mathematics, and Newtonian physics. Whitehead writes:

> 'In so far as the intellectual climates of different epochs can be contrasted, the eighteenth century in Europe was the complete antithesis of the Middle Ages .... The Middle Ages were haunted with the desire to rationalize the infinite: the men of the eighteenth century rationalized the social life of modern

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[2] E.H. Meyer. English Chamber Music (Conoon: Lawrence and Wishart, 1946), pp. 250-1.

> communities, and based their sociological theories on an appeal to the facts of nature. The earlier period was the age of faith based upon reason. In the latter period they let sleeping dogs lie: it was the age of reason based upon faith.
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> 'For a thousand years Europe had been a prey to intolerant, intolerable visionaries. The common sense of the eighteenth century, its grasp of the obvious facts of human suffering, and of the obvious demands of human nature, acted on the world like a bath of moral cleansing.'

But man cannot gain sustenance from disinfectants. If the eighteenth century had liberated thought, humanised government, and begun material enrichment, it also provided inadequate elements to serve for the expression of the less obvious but more important needs and experiences of mankind. Hence the Romantic Reaction.[3]

The twentieth century's widespread interest in serious music is certainly not created by stress; but is the interest not sharpened by the gloomy references to war, for example, of which the media never tire of reminding their audiences? Music then becomes an escape -- the term is not used pejoratively -- to relief, solace, assurance. (In other days, this was the role of religion.) War is the gruesome invention: it is as wrong ethically as it is economically, yet few have questioned (and fewer denied) the decision of employing arms to restrain economically aggressive political action. Freedom and tolerance, morals and politics, go their individual but not entirely unrelated ways. They usually meet on exceptional or bizzare occasions. In they respect they are like sex. Sex, on the one hand, has the character of a distinct and vivid kind of experience, but on the other it has a hard-to-define translucent pervasiveness in life. It is singular and

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[3] Science and the Modern World (London: Cambridge University Press, 1926), p. 80 ff.

of course limited, but yet has vast extension throughout much of experience. The reconciliation is partly what love means; -- except at weddings and divorce courts where sex asserts its exclusivity and proclaims itself a matter of 'private life'.

Music seems to be removed from all this; it could care less about a by-law prohibiting wandering dogs, or forbidding sleeping overnight in a park. Musical experience is on a different plane. Competent men have thought that it is not that music and social conditions are at odds, but that they never meet. Stravinsky thought that music can express nothing -- save itself. This is known as the argument of significant form. Of course it begs the question. After all, music is but one of the arts; and it is foolish to assert that the arts have no meaning -- no connection, no significance, no interpretive power -- for society. To say this is to maintain that an artist has no responsibility to his community, and is also to endorse a conception of objectivity that has no real existence; real objectivity is not life-denying. The artist's claim that he is above social happenings is the same as the scientist's claim that he is not responsible for what society thinks about or does with his technology. And the danger in both claims is also the same: fostering depersonalization and its attendant non-participatory passive-mindedness born of apathy and disillusionment from the seemingly futile struggle to gain self worth in the midst of giant institutions. The effect of this state of mind or culture is telling to a discriminating soul:

> 'It is horrible to walk through a picture or sculpture gallery where completely unrelated subjects appear side by side. Painting lost meaning when it passed from something for church or home to an isolated phenomenon. If we paint or view a picture in a frame, we can imagine ourselves looking out through a window. But to paint

> for exhibitions -- this is beyond discussion. An age which sees value in exhibitions has lost its connection with art. By this can be seen how much waits to be done in culture if we would find our way back to the spiritual-artistic. Exhibitions must be overcome. Of course some individual artists detest exhibitions. But today we live in an age where the individual cannot achieve very much unless his judgment grows out of a world-conception permeating fully free human beings; just as world-conceptions permeating people in less free ages led to the rise of genuine cultures. Only a spiritual world-conception can build up a true culture, the indubitably artistic.'[4]

A return is made to war and music. Did the operatic Strauss or the symphonic Sibelius, did pianist Ravel or Spanish de Falla receive inspiration from war? No; only Strauss wrote somewhere that he wished the damn thing would stop so composers could get on with their compositions. But the non-composers are different: civilians and soldiers found in music encouragement, peace of mind, a refreshment of the spirit -- an escape from the Furies. Why?

Look at Beethoven. His last piano sonata deserves the epithet transcendental: it is beyond mundane experience both in feeling and in thought. Here there is no argument as there is in question and answer of the F major Quartet, Op. 135 -- Muss es sein? Es muss sein! Es muss sein. Op. 111 has vision rather than debate. The C minor Sonata is poetry, just as Plato's philosophy is poetry. The profound variations of the Arietta speak of height and depth, arabesques soar to heaven's sacred vault and settle gently as morning dew on emerald grass: two hands waft the keyboard bestriding the universe and eternity.[5]

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[4] Rudolf Steiner. The Arts and Their Mission, (trans. L.D. Manges, V. Moore) (New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1964) pp. 81-2.

[5] Thomas Mann. Doctor Faustus, pp. 51-56.

The imprecision of this sort of language waxing eloquent is at odds with the precision of the music itself. Non-musical terms cannot convey the philosophical substance of the composition. Adequate translation is impossible.[6] The Quartets of Opp. 130, 132, and the magnificent 131 in C sharp minor, along with the piano sonatas Opp. 106 and 111, are the product of one gigantic attempt by Beethoven to grasp between the years 1824-26 the formulation of a scheme of things as great as one could master in music. There has been no comparable attempt before or since. The last decade of Beethoven's creative output is the apogee of Western art. It deals with the reality glimpsed in the appearances, the trilogy of God, Freedom, and Immortality.

Yes, the spirit is refreshed by music in times of strain; but this is a psychological observation and does not answer why this is so. Plato knew better. In the Republic (401D) he said, The musical experiences (of rhythm and harmony) enter into the inmost core of the soul and fasten strongly upon it, imparting order to it, and making its possessor a harmonious person. In other words, music has a beneficial though largely unconscious effect on the mind. On the other hand, its gracious coherence consciously entertained is a reminder to the alert mind that principles of order are real. War is disorderly and ugly; it can be understood as what it is by art providing the antidote of opportunity for comprehensibility and recognition of beauty. Understood, that is, and so acted upon, only if the brief appearances of art are sustained in consciousness. No man -- no epoch -- can be the same after an intimate familiarity with the last works of Beethoven.

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6 Langer. Philosophy in a New Key, p. 233.

The interest in serious music in this century is thus a step in the right direction. But only a step: the tendency is there, while the ability or courage to follow it through is lacking. In the current epoch we share much with everyone, and very little with anyone. This is the result of following a thorough-going division of labour in a densely populated and integrated (on one level) society. Thence the three main characteristics of some music of the schools today: specialization, superficiality, and coldness. As we depend on skilled labour to supply our household appliances (and to service them, also) and our food and cigarettes, so we expect specialists and trained workers to provide our music. And the music is taken the same way as bad whiskey: deftly swallowed. The superficiality has to do with commercialism: as ever larger audiences are desired to be reached (in some sense) it is evident that less can be taken for granted as understood in common. Eventually, the simplest sort of symbols are used, and music becomes a dull cliché indicating the standardized response mechanisms of the personnel in a dying culture.[7] The superficiality of this music is directly proportional to the increasing totalitarianism and standardization of a society that provides ever less opportunity for the existence of individualized diversity. A showing of the emotions is generally frowned upon as disturbing of someone else's passivity and insensitivity in the face of that fossilization of life which requires a full-bodied, rich, and potent refusal on the part of persons to be embalmed alive. 'Significance as an aesthetic virtue is a protest against trivialities, a demand for things worth while.'[8]

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[7] Adorno. "On Popular Music", pp. 17-26.

[8] H.H. Britan. The Philosophy of Music (London: Longman's Green, 1911), p. 115.

Of course the businessman's response to these observations concerning this cultural era is also typical of the era: he regards them as an emotional outburst of an immature radical. From his point of view the bourgeois society is a free society based on individualism, the ultimate expression of which is the free competitive market. Two more of his views are that music is a pleasurable luxury (the utilitarian view of the mid-eighteenth century bourgeoisie), and that the poor will always be with us. These two prejudices are not unrelated. What the businessman does not want to admit (since he lives either on inherited wealth or on the milk of the land, receiving according to the quantity of his production and not according to the quality of his ability for significant individual contribution to a community) is that the free enterprise system -- which made so promising an entrance as the destroyer of all hierarchical feudal-type relations in the economy of a historical era -- produces a complexity of superficial social relations the like of which is hitherto unknown to man. The clambering for unselfrestrained individualism produces precisely the opposite of the original intention: a crude collectivisation where 'individuality' is marked by such significant expressions as proclaiming its preference of General Motors to Ford products.

The situation of the businessman is not unlike that of the twelve-tone composer. What happens to individuality in society is that which happens to notes in this technique: they share much in terms of the structure which they support, but have the smallest relationship to one another. The genesis of these two situations is also the same. The twelve-tone theorist claims to respect the individuality of each note and free it from feudal submission to tonality. The fact is that notes and people are gregarious; in isolation they are neither notes nor men, but tones and personnel.

Under the thumb of obligarchy notes and men vegetate as abstractions purged of their life blood and visceral abilities of interpretive action.

Hence coldness, the age of analysis, and the abstractions of logic. These are needed to perpetuate the culture's making man an enemy of man. The price war inherent in capitalism (to cite but one example) means that one capitalist is compelled to ruin another, for if one of them delays the process of destruction, it only signifies his own earlier destruction. And coldness is the most efficient affective tone to adopt if one's general pre-occupation is to keep the head above water. Feelings are regarded in this context as distracting, disrupting, and extraneous to the 'equilibrium' to maintain. Thus art is wont to be a luxury, not a source of revelation. At this point art is confused with kitsch. Art is revolutionary in essence.

In 1961 the great pianist Artur Rubenstein said, 'Scriabin was a romantic lyricist. He always has emotion and feeling, even underneath his most schablone -- patterned and schemed -- music. The public wants coldness, not warmth. Look at this vogue for pre-Bach! Look at those moderns who are popular. Where's the lyric sweep? The heart? No, today rejects Scriabin and his romanticism.'[9] Beethoven's Lebewohl Sonata in E flat major, Op. 81a, was written when it still was not regarded as a sign of 'weak effeminateness' or 'latent homosexuality' for men to shed a tear for the absence of a dear friend. The coldness of theatre life almost silenced the genius of Carl Nielsen while he was conductor of the Royal Opera from 1908-14. He came to reject the theatre, fortunately, and forthwith composed a work in praise of the adventures of life:

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[9] Bowers, Scriabin, Volume I, p. 84.

the 'Inextinguishable' Symphony. But his formerly deep despair is visible in these warm and moderate lines to his friend Anton Svendson: 'I don't believe that I am by nature of a sentimental disposition, but when I left you today I had a lump in my throat. I have not felt so strongly moved for many years, and only thus can I understand myself; that your glance and your handshake radiated something of the warmth which, without knowing it and without wanting or daring to ask for, I have for so long and dissolutioning [sic] a time needed so terribly, more terribly than anyone suspects.' So simple and honest a response to the loving companionship of a beautiful soul could only come as a profoundly significant and exceptional insight in the context of a culture sustained generally by frigidity and the suspension of life.

The correlation between music and civilization may be slight at the surface, but it is pervasive at the roots. Euripides in the Hippolytus writes that art is not absolutely essential for living. Freedom is realized to the degree this statement is contravened.

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